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San Francisco. Department of  
City Planning.

Downtown San Francisco con-  
servation and development plan-  
ning program ...









DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO  
CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
PLANNING PROGRAM PHASE I STUDY





2

# DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING PROGRAM


PHASE I: RECONNAISSANCE AND PROGRAMMING

SEDWAY/COOKE  
San Francisco, California

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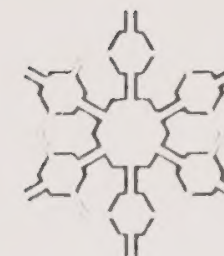
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October 8, 1979

Mr. Rai Y. Okamoto  
Director of Planning  
San Francisco Department of City Planning  
100 Larkin Street  
San Francisco, California 94102

Dear Mr. Okamoto:

Submitted herewith is the Downtown San Francisco Conservation and Development Plan Phase I report. It includes an identification of growth issues facing Downtown in the near- and long-term future, documents their planning implications, details the work program for Phases 2 and 3, and proposes interim controls while the plan is being prepared.

We believe the findings of this initial study define an appropriate planning direction. Whatever the outcome of Proposition O, it is imperative that the City move quickly to avoid the difficulties which could confront Downtown without decisive action.

A major finding of the study is that under both C-3 and Proposition O futures, the same overall amount of growth could be accommodated, although its form and distribution will differ. Other findings are as follows. 1) New Downtown employees will generate substantial housing demand, and new Downtown growth, particularly under Proposition O, will directly displace many low- and moderate-income residents. 2) Commuter movement will increase enormously, by 25 percent near-term and by 60 percent long-term, requiring substantial transit improvements. Beyond 1985, no increase in peak-period auto traffic could be accommodated. 3) Both of the growth scenarios revealed that historic structures will continue to be imperiled. Under Proposition O more buildings will be put in jeopardy due to a more dispersed land demand. However, under C-3 zoning the threat to larger-scale, prominent structures will be more severe. 4) Views of the Downtown skyline





Mr. Rai Y. Okamoto  
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will change dramatically under C-3 zoning, with many distinctive images obliterated and views of hills and Bay destroyed. More shadows will be cast by taller buildings. Under both scenarios, the distinction between Downtown and Nob, Telegraph and Potrero Hills will be blurred and the streetscape will be less inviting. 5) More restricted land supply and increased demand for building space will drive up rents, thereby dislocating industrial and commercial service firms, and reducing the diversity and mutual support function which currently exists. 6) The growing imbalance between tax resources derived from Downtown and the rest of the City suggests that incremental costs for new Downtown development will likely exceed incremental revenues by as much as 25 percent.

These findings suggest a plan to serve as a clear basis for equitable and effective land use control. The plan should consider larger citywide and regional needs, provide latitude for individual building design and be flexible and amenable to change in form and format. The Master Downtown Plan EIR should be sufficiently detailed and comprehensive enough to substitute for separate project environmental impact reports.

The interim controls proposed are not yet based on a comprehensive plan and are not a model for ultimate regulation. They are intended to avoid a "moving target" while the plan is being prepared and to prevent design calamities. The controls prohibit demolition or alteration of notable historic structures, curb removal of residential units or conversion of residential hotels, restrict displacement of blue collar employment in a new industrial and commercial service study district, prohibit construction of long-term parking, limit bonus features of current C-3 controls, create a special Portsmouth Corridor District with a 100 foot height limit, and suggest new energy conservation guidelines. To deal with overall growth questions and impose an overall ceiling, the controls embodied in Proposition O are proposed for interim enactment.

We wish to acknowledge the helpful contributions made by the citizens liaison panel and technical committee, as well as by the staffs of the Planning Department and other city and regional agencies.



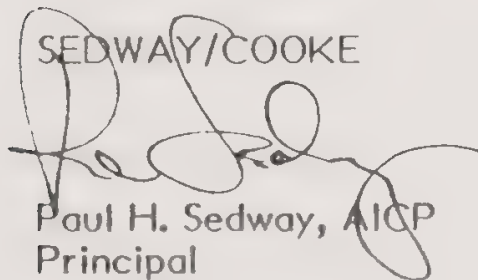


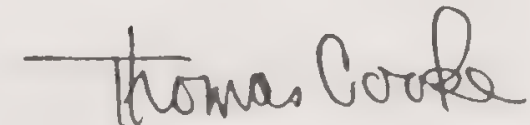


Mr. Rai Y. Okamoto  
October 8, 1979  
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We hope this report will provide a point of departure for Phases 2 and 3 of the planning program and make a useful contribution to the dialogue which has begun on the future of Downtown.

Sincerely yours,

SEDWAY/COOKE  
  
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Principal

  
Thomas Cooke, AICP  
Principal

TC/PHS/glw

Attachment







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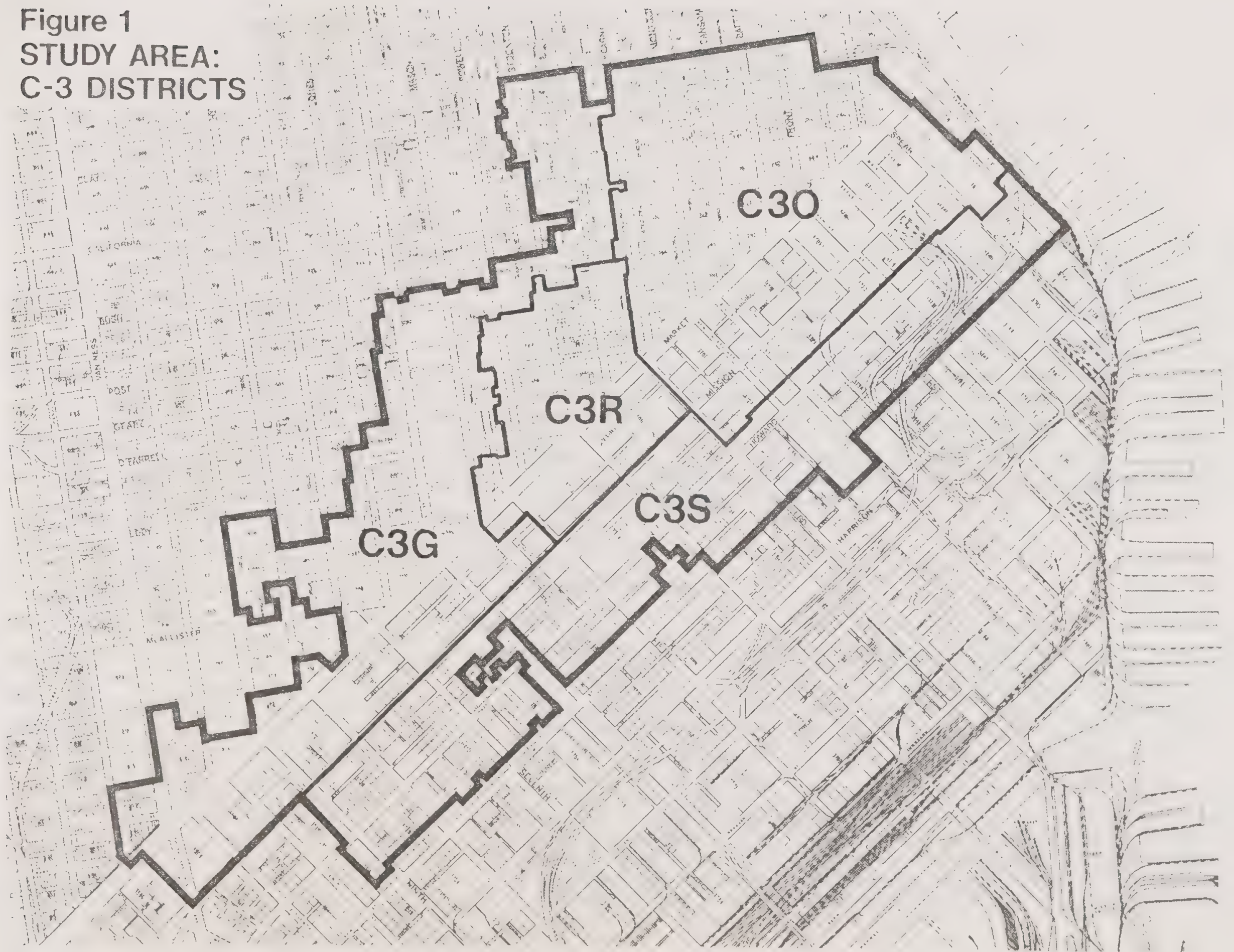
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Figure 1  
STUDY AREA:  
C-3 DISTRICTS







# 1 INTRODUCTION

## BACKGROUND

The dramatic rate of recent change in central cities in this country has been felt first in downtowns. Downtowns have been transformed by transit and movement systems, by the formation of corporate conglomerates, and by increases in personal income, as well as by increased needs for professional services and changes in production and warehousing. San Francisco has been spared none of this "future shock." Yet its mushrooming growth has not until now been matched by a public commitment to deal with the implications of growth and with its social, economic, physical, and environmental impacts. The most recent comprehensive look at the Downtown was completed more than 15 years ago; related zoning changes were made in 1968. Since the "half-life" of a central city zoning ordinance (i.e., the period when it is truly responsive to need) is normally about 5 years, a new study (of which this report is the first result) is a decade overdue. The actions taken now should be correspondingly swift and vigorous.

## REGULATORY HISTORY

The history of Downtown planning documents recent inaction. San Francisco's first zoning ordinance was enacted in 1921, and has been amended sporadically. A new citywide zoning ordinance placing a large section of the city in a single Downtown zoning district, designated C-3, was enacted in 1960. The ordinance contained uniform provisions for land uses permitted in the area, a total exemption from off-street parking requirements for all uses, and a single building bulk limitation.

In 1963 a report entitled Downtown San Francisco proposed a general plan that focused on three primary issues: transportation and circulation, preservation of historic buildings, and Downtown functional areas (offices, retailing and wholesaling, public services, hotels and housing). To implement its recommendations, the plan relied mainly on zoning, circulation improvements, and limited suggestions for strengthening the Downtown functional areas and the neighborhoods.









**Figure 2**  
**HEIGHT AND**  
**BULK DISTRICTS:**  
**C-3 ZONING**

Bulk Limits			
	Height above which max. dimensions apply	Max. Plan Dimensions	
		Length	Diagonal Dim.
A	40 feet	100 feet	125 feet
B	50	110	125
C	80	110	125
D	40	110	140
E	65	110	140
F	80	110	140
G	80	170	200
H	100	170	200
I	150	170	200
J	40	250	300
K	60	250	300
L	80	250	300
M	100	250	300

The San Francisco Downtown Zoning Study, completed in 1966, attempted to project the next 15 years of Downtown growth and development. The study's basic goal was the "fulfillment of all the potentials of the Downtown area, through the maximization of development in a manner consistent with community values and efficient organization of functions."

Based on the 1963 plan and the 1966 zoning study, the zoning ordinance as amended in 1968 expanded the C-3 zone in recognition of the impact BART would have south of Market Street. The Downtown was subdivided into four principal districts, roughly approximating their functions: office, retail, general commercial, and public service. A system of development bonuses was added that would award additional building space for a particular development depending upon the "public benefit" or amenity provided.

The bulk control under the 1968 zoning amendments provided for a maximum floor area ratio (FAR: the ratio of a building's total floor area to the area of the lot) of 20:1, with 25:1 permitted on corner lots. The Board of Supervisors later reduced the maximum FAR permitted to 16:1, with 20:1 for corner lots.

Today the framework for Downtown zoning is much as it was a decade ago, except that the basic FARs for the C-3 districts have been amended and height and bulk districts have been added (see Figures 1 and 2).

**NEED, PURPOSE AND APPROACH**

The need to redefine Downtown planning and urban design criteria continues. The 1971 Urban Design Plan of the San Francisco Master Plan sought to guide development Downtown, but this plan was a statement of guiding policy, not a set of binding regulations. For several years the Department of City Planning has pointed out the need for a Downtown regulatory structure. The Director of Planning has stated the objective of the San Francisco Downtown Conservation and Development Plan as follows:

"to manage Downtown growth and change in a way that enhances and optimizes San Francisco's economic, social, environmental and cultural vitality, and minimizes or mitigates possible adverse effects of continued growth such as traffic congestion, loss of historic structures, air pollution and loss of urban quality, amenity and diversity."











## Figure 3 HEIGHT AND BULK DISTRICTS: PROPOSITION O

The final Downtown Plan will be the product of three phases of work. The Phase I study identifies and assesses the major economic and social issues, planning opportunities, and alternatives associated with continued Downtown growth and conservation. Phase I details the scope of work that will be required during later phases of the Downtown planning process, and develops interim controls to guide development while the Downtown Plan and final legislative amendments to the Planning Code and Zoning Ordinance are developed.

Phase 2, which will take 15 months to complete, will be the preparation of the Downtown Plan. The plan will indicate how, when, and where office, commercial and retail uses, and housing and public services will be distributed and developed.

During Phase 3, which will take 6 months to complete, Planning Code and Zoning Ordinance amendments will be presented to appropriate bodies for enactment.

The purpose of the Phase I study is to examine the physical, economic, and social forces that shape Downtown and to project these into the future. The examination required identifying and analyzing the planning issues facing Downtown; looking at the impacts and problems associated with Downtown growth and development, and public and private responses to those problems; and finally, preparing a continuing process and program for planning and interim controls.

The results and findings of Phase I were based on the identification and analysis of a set of key issues, among which were the following:

- o the role of Downtown in relation to the rest of the city and region
- o the type and level of activity to be carried on in Downtown
- o the tolerable limits of the environmental and social impacts of Downtown activities
- o the appropriate physical form and appearance of Downtown and its buildings
- o the insuring of accessibility and movement to and around Downtown
- o the extent of Downtown housing opportunities
- o the conservation of natural resources (especially energy) in the Downtown
- o the kinds of public facilities and services essential to support Downtown expansion







C-3 District	Floor Area Ratio (FAR) Limits			
	Current		Proposition O	
	Base	Max.	Base	Max.
Office	14:1	None	8:1	14:1
Retail	10:1	None	7:1	10:1
General	10:1	None	5:1	8:1
Support	7:1	None	5:1	8:1

- o the importance of retaining the city's history and architectural heritage Downtown
- o the importance of Downtown remaining as a liveable, workable, and vital area.

The general approach to Phase I work involved an assessment of four "futures". The demand for future growth and development was examined and projected under two sets of regulations: first under the current C-3 Zoning Ordinance and City Planning Code, and second under the zoning and code amendments contained in Proposition O (see Figure 3 and accompanying table which compares Proposition O and C-3 FARs). The impact of continued development under these two regulatory structures was studied at two points, the near-term and long-term, and C-3 and Proposition O scenarios were prepared.

This approach served several purposes:

- o it compared current regulations to those under Proposition O and demonstrated the development trends that are likely when significant changes are made in height limits and permissible FAR
- o it examined the effect that changes in regulations may have on the overall rate of growth Downtown
- o it examined differences in the likely pattern of Downtown development
- o it identified the significant adverse impacts associated with one regulatory option or the other
- o it identified major issues which should be addressed by the Downtown planning program.

This report is organized into five major sections. In addition to this introduction, which explains the function of Phase I of the Downtown San Francisco Conservation and Development Plan program, the following sections detail the research, analysis, and findings of the report.

Section 2 discusses how Phase I work was conducted and the basic assumptions concerning growth and supply and demand used throughout the report. Section 3 pursues the critical issues associated with the Section 2 research, while Section 4 presents the long-range plan and program needed to implement better goals for the Downtown. Section 5 discusses how development should be controlled while the complete Downtown Plan is being prepared.





# 2 STUDY FRAMEWORK

## ANALYSIS OF DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

Though Downtown development can occur through new construction or through rehabilitation, this study has been primarily concerned with the effects of replacing old buildings with new construction and with construction on vacant lots.

In order to understand what the Downtown will be like in the future, it was necessary to make projections and forecasts. Of particular importance were estimates of the number of square feet which could be built in the C-3 zone and the demand for that space. This information falls into three basic categories:

- o the supply of land
- o the amount of building space which can be built on that land
- o the demand for various types of building space

From this information, the specific type of growth in the C-3 zone could be estimated. The following section details how the building space projections were made in this study, and how that building space was allocated within the C-3 zone.

## LAND CAPACITY

The potential capacity of the C-3 zone to absorb new building space is dependent upon land supply. In this report, such land is often referred to as "available" or "underutilized."

New development is more likely to occur on sites where the value of the land is equal to or greater than the value of the improvements on the land. Based upon this assumption, a lot-by-lot analysis of data for the entire C-3 zone from the Assessor's Office for the City and County of San Francisco showed approximately 168 acres or 7,317,000 square feet of available land.



Figure 4: SUBAREAS









# Figure 5 LAND CAPACITY

NUMBERS are in Acres

Excludes 7.12 acres now under construction

SUBAREA 9 is the Yerba Buena Redevelopment Project Area where 100% absorption of the land is assumed

The land supply figures used in this report are estimates. The supply may increase or decrease depending on the real estate market and the relative demand for land in subareas within the Downtown. The following chart illustrates the distribution of this land supply.

TABLE I  
DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO C-3 ZONE LAND CAPACITY

Subarea	Under Construction (acres)	Proposed Construction (acres)	Additional Supply (acres)	Total (acres)	%
1	3.86	4.73	20.87	29.46	17.5
2	1.84	4.20	12.87	18.91	11.3
3	.99	1.28	18.62	20.89	12.5
4	--	--	31.45	31.45	18.7
5	--	--	20.22	20.22	12.0
6	--	3.17	9.50	12.67	7.5
7	.44	.39	13.61	14.00	8.6
8	--	--	19.93	19.93	11.9
9	--	--	--	--	--
Total	7.12	13.77	147.08	167.97	100

This land supply includes sites where buildings of historic or architectural merit may exist, because neither the current C-3 zoning system nor the amendments under Proposition O provide sufficient protection to prevent their demolition. Land within the Yerba Buena Center (YBC) has been excluded from the land supply figures because such land will be utilized according to the program established by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency.

## BUILDING SPACE CAPACITY

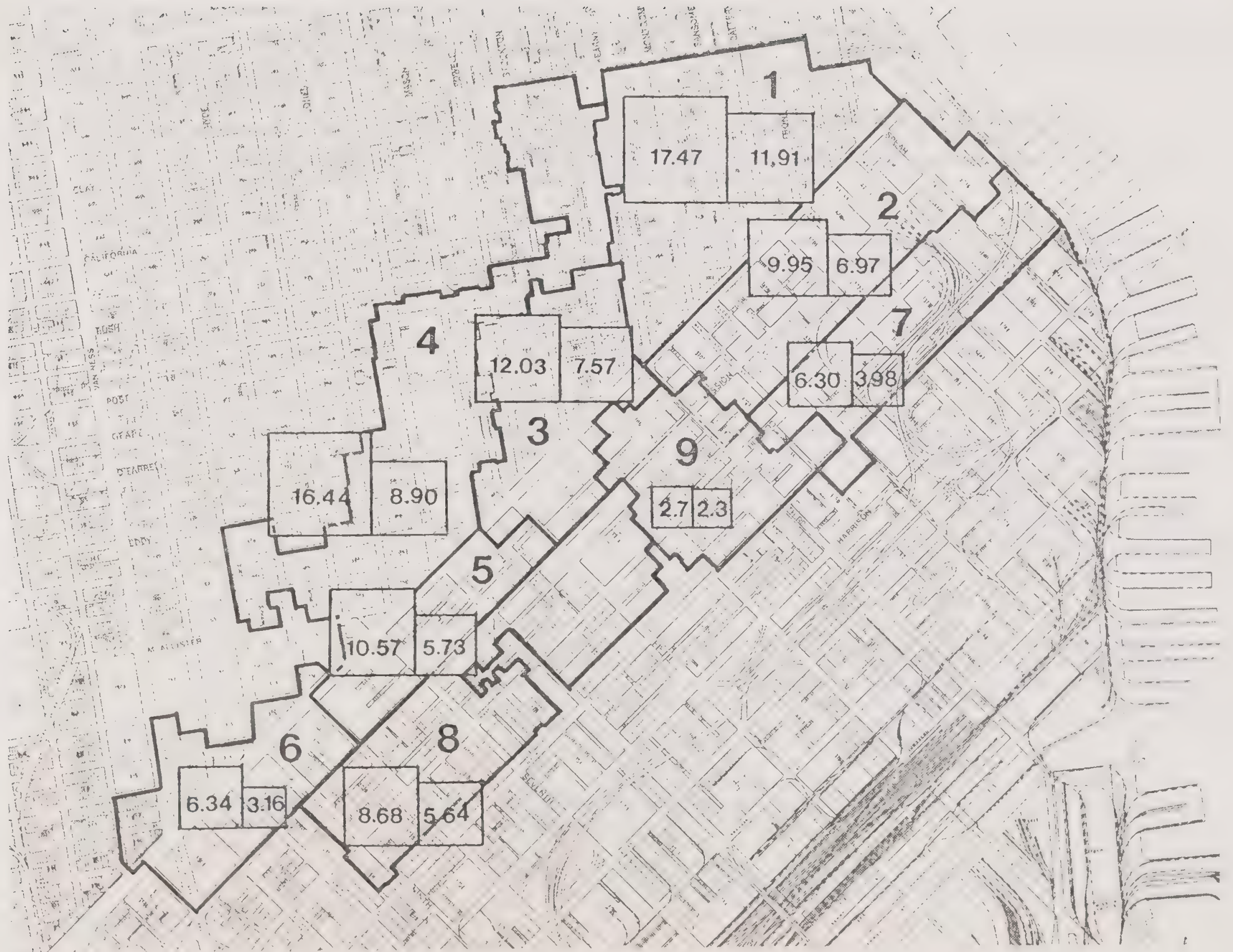
Building space capacity is here defined as the amount of floor space that could be built in the C-3 zone. The Phase I study made an estimate of development capacity under two assumptions:

- o the current C-3 Zoning Ordinance and City Planning Code
- o the amendments proposed under Proposition O.





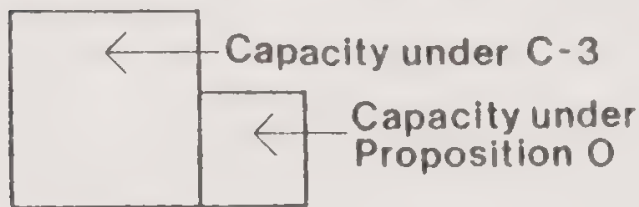








**Figure 6**  
**BUILDING CAPACITY**



By understanding Downtown development capacity under these assumptions, we can assess the change in density which development and redevelopment could bring about.

Development capacity is constrained by many factors, including the size of the land, the topography, land use and urban design controls, capacity of the transportation system, circulation, parking, public services, and utilities. The figures below reflect these factors.

Based on a block-by-block calculation of the floor space that the available land can accommodate, capacities for development were estimated, both under the current C-3 zoning scheme and under Proposition O. Where potential development parcels were contiguous, they were assembled. The development capacity of the sites either under construction or where applications for building permits have been filed reflect the floor space as planned. The development capacity of the portion of YBC within the C-3 zone comes from the figures currently used by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency for planning purposes.

Tables 2 and 3 illustrate that there are approximately 4.5 million square feet of building space under construction on 7.1 acres of land. Almost 6.3 million square feet of floor space on 13.7 acres are proposed. There are about 2.7 million square feet of floor space programmed on 33 acres for the YBC project area.

Were Proposition O to pass, the floor space for the building proposed above would have to be changed to reflect the new restrictions. The proposed projects would then be allowed approximately 4 million square feet instead of 6.3 million. The YBC program would be reduced to 2.3 million square feet. The largest reduction in the YBC program would occur in the office sector.

In sum, the total land supply assumed in this report is approximately 168 acres. There are 33 additional acres within the YBC project area. Under the current C-3 zoning system, up to 95 million gross square feet of building floor space can be built within the C-3 zone. The amendments proposed under Proposition O will reduce that development capacity to approximately 61 million gross square feet or 64 percent of capacity under the current zoning system.

NUMBERS are in Millions of Square Feet

Excludes 4.53 million square feet now under construction



**ESTIMATES OF SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM MARKET DEMAND FOR BUILDING SPACE**

Demand for building space is a function of many factors and may be altered or constrained by such things as public services and transportation facilities, public





TABLE 2  
BUILDING CAPACITY UNDER CURRENT C-3 ZONING\*

CURRENT C-3 ZONING: Assuming Base FAR

Subarea	Under Construction	Proposed Construction	Additional Capacity	FAR Assumed	Total Capacity	%
1	2,595,000	2,922,000	12,726,000	14:1	18,243,000	23.1
2	1,057,000	974,000	7,854,000	14:1	9,885,000	12.5
3	656,000	675,000	8,110,000	10:1	9,441,000	11.9
4	--	--	13,700,000	10:1	13,700,000	17.3
5	--	--	8,810,000	10:1	8,810,000	11.1
6	--	1,375,000	4,140,000	10:1	5,515,000	7.0
7	220,000	372,000	4,151,000	7:1	4,743,000	6.0
8	--	--	6,076,000	7:1	6,076,000	7.7
9	--	2,694,000	--	--	2,694,000	3.4
Total	4,528,000	9,012,000	65,567,000		79,107,000	100.0

CURRENT C-3 ZONING: Assuming use of bonus features for FAR

Subarea	Under Construction	Proposed Construction	Additional Capacity	FAR Assumed	Total Capacity	%
1	2,595,000	2,922,000	14,544,000	16:1	20,061,000	21.1
2	1,057,000	974,000	8,976,000	16:1	11,007,000	11.6
3	656,000	675,000	11,354,000	14:1	12,685,000	13.4
4	--	--	16,440,000	12:1	16,440,000	17.3
5	--	--	10,572,000	12:1	10,572,000	11.1
6	--	1,375,000	4,968,000	12:1	6,343,000	7.7
7	220,000	372,000	5,930,000	10:1	6,552,000	6.9
8	--	--	8,680,000	10:1	8,680,000	9.1
9	--	2,694,000	--	--	2,694,000	2.8
Total	4,528,000	9,012,000	81,464,000		95,004,000	100.0

\*The building capacity of the C-3 zone was computed according to:  
o the base FARs under the current C-3 zoning (14:1 for C-3-O, 10:1 for C-3-R and C-3-G, 7:1 for C-3-S)  
o the bonus FARs under the current C-3 zoning (16:1 for C-3-O, 14:1 for C-3-4, 12:1 for C-3-G, 10:1 for C-3-S). The bonus FARs are based on the average of the precedent.





TABLE 3  
BUILDING CAPACITY UNDER PROPOSITION O\*

PROPOSITION O: Assuming base FAR

Subarea	Under Construction	Proposed Construction	Additional Capacity	FAR Assumed	Total Capacity	%
1	2,595,000	1,912,000	7,272,000	8:1	11,779,000	24.1
2	1,057,000	797,000	4,488,000	8:1	6,342,000	13.0
3	656,000	675,000	5,677,000	7:1	7,008,000	14.3
4	--	--	6,850,000	5:1	6,850,000	14.0
5	--	--	4,405,000	5:1	4,405,000	9.0
6	--	468,000	2,070,000	5:1	2,538,000	5.2
7	220,000	127,000	2,965,000	5:1	3,312,000	6.8
8	--	--	4,340,000	5:1	4,340,000	8.9
9		2,279,000		--	2,279,000	4.7
Total	4,528,000	6,258,000	38,067,000		48,853,000	100.0

PROPOSITION O: Assuming use of bonus features for FAR

Subarea	Under Construction	Proposed Construction	Additional Capacity	FAR Assumed	Total Capacity	%
1	2,595,000	1,912,000	9,999,000	11:1	14,506,000	24.0
2	1,057,000	797,000	6,171,000	11:1	8,025,000	13.2
3	656,000	675,000	6,894,000	8.5:1	8,225,000	13.5
4	--	--	8,905,000	6.5:1	8,905,000	14.7
5	--	--	5,727,000	6.5:1	5,727,000	10.2
6	--	468,000	2,691,000	6.5:1	3,159,000	4.4
7	220,000	127,000	3,855,000	6.5:1	4,202,000	6.9
8	--	--	5,642,000	6.5:1	5,642,000	9.3
9		2,279,000		--	2,279,000	3.8
Total	4,528,000	6,258,000	49,884,000		60,670,000	100.0

\*The building capacity of the C-3 zone was computed according to:

- o the base FARs proposed in Proposition O (8:1 for C-3-O, 7:1 for C-3-R, 5:1 for C-3-G and C-3-S)
- o the bonus FARs under Proposition O (11:1 for C-3-O, 8.5:1 for C-3-R, 6.5:1 for C-3-G and C-3-S). The bonus FARs represent the mid-range between the base and maximum FARs proposed in Proposition O.



finance and revenues, and environmental quality questions. For the purpose of this analysis, it was assumed that the demand for increased building space would not be constrained by any major factors.

The purpose of this task was thus to forecast the potential demand for development of new office, retail, tourist hotel, and "other" building space within the C-3 zone. The estimates of building space are based upon a combination of employment projections, trends in historical development of building space, comparisons to previous studies on employment and building space, and consultations with individuals knowledgeable in the area. The analysis identifies the four types of building space and focuses on three points in time: a base year (1979) and two projection years, one near-term (roughly equivalent to 1985) and one long-term (roughly equivalent to 2000).

The purpose in making the demand estimates in this section is not to insist that these levels of development will occur at a fixed point in time. The purpose is first to look at levels of growth which may be attained within the reasonable future and later to identify the likely range and degree of impact associated with such levels of growth.

For the purposes of estimating demand for employment and building space, the base year is 1979. Except for tourist hotel workers, employment estimates are derived from data supplied by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). Estimates for tourist hotel employment and space were derived from estimates of hotel rooms from a report prepared by Laventhol and Horwath for the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency.

It is possible to translate the number of employees into the amount of building space necessary to accommodate such workers. This is accomplished by using a number which represents the average amount of building space occupied by employees in various job categories. Thus, the number of employees within each of the four categories is multiplied by the amount of floor space necessary to accommodate such workers. The following table illustrates the number of gross square feet assigned to employment categories in 1979, in the near-term estimate and the long-term estimate.

Year	Employment Category		
	Office	Retail	Other
1979	255	600	800
Near-Term (1985)	260	600	800
Long-Term (2000)	265	600	800





In 1979, approximately 15,600 tourist hotel rooms were estimated within the downtown. The ratio of 0.7 employees per room was used to calculate the number of employees assigned to the tourist hotel category. It was also assumed that hotel space can be derived by using a figure of 600 gross square feet per room. The same ratio of employees per room was used for the near-term and long-term estimates.

Table 4 illustrates the estimates of employment and building space within the downtown for 1979 and for near-term and long-term projections:

**TABLE 4: GROWTH ESTIMATES**

**EMPLOYMENT AND BUILDING SPACE IN THE C-3 ZONE--1979**

Number of Workers				Gross Square Feet of Space (in millions)				
<u>Office</u>	<u>Retail</u>	<u>Hotel</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Office</u>	<u>Retail</u>	<u>Hotel</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Total</u>
160,000	30,000	11,000	42,000	40	18	9	8	75

**UNCONSTRAINED GROWTH OF EMPLOYMENT & DEVELOPMENT OF  
BUILDING SPACE IN THE C-3 ZONE - NEAR-TERM (1985)**

Number of Workers				Gross Square Feet of Space (in millions)				
<u>Office</u>	<u>Retail</u>	<u>Hotel</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Office</u>	<u>Retail</u>	<u>Hotel</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Total</u>
204,000	33,000	15,000	50,000	53	20	12	10	95

**UNCONSTRAINED GROWTH OF EMPLOYMENT & DEVELOPMENT OF  
BUILDING SPACE IN THE C-3 ZONE - LONG-TERM (2000)**

Number of Workers				Gross Square Feet of Space (in millions)				
<u>Office</u>	<u>Retail</u>	<u>Hotel</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Office</u>	<u>Retail</u>	<u>Hotel</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Total</u>
275,000	38,000	20,000	55,000	73	23	17	11	124

The figures presented in Table 4 indicate that the total gross square feet of building space within the C-3 zone is currently 75 million. The unconstrained near-term demand for increased space is an additional 20 million, and the long-term demands an additional 49 million square feet. Thus, within 20 years, it can be expected that the total demand for floor space within the C-3 zone will be 124 million square feet.





## FORMULATION OF DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS

The development scenarios presented here provide the basis for identifying growth induced impacts and the resulting issues, that must be addressed in the Downtown Plan. For this reason two scenarios have been prepared: one assuming the continuation of the current C-3 regulations, the other assuming the enactment of the Proposition O amendments. It should be noted that the scenarios depict likely futures, assuming certain conditions. They are not plans nor are they exact predictions of the future. Their sole purpose is to permit a better understanding of possible future conditions and in this way to enable a more intelligent public discussion of the future of Downtown San Francisco. Each scenario has been prepared for two periods of time. The first is a near-term depiction approximating development at about 1985. The second is a long-term depiction development at about 20 years in the future.

The major assumptions and considerations used in this exercise are as follows:

- o The prime areas for office locations will continue to be in the financial district of the C-3-O; for retail, in the C-3-R; for hotel, in the C-3-R and C-3-G near Union Square and in the vicinity of the George Moscone Convention Center. Other uses (such as commercial services and wholesaling) will be south of Market Street.
- o Most of the retail space will accompany office, hotel, and other developments on the street levels, and in some cases on the second and third levels.
- o Most developments will use the bonus features. Under the C-3 scenario, increases in FARs equivalent to the historic average have been assumed. Under the Proposition O scenario a moderate increase in the FAR is assumed. However, small parcels (less than 10,000 square feet) and locations where height limitations are more stringent (as in the vicinity of Chinatown and the Civic Center) will not achieve bonus FARs but rather the base FARs.
- o The development allocation on sites under construction will reflect the as-committed programs of building space in both scenarios.
- o The development allocation on sites where applications for permits have been filed, will reflect the as-planned programs of building space in the C-3 scenario. However, in the Proposition O scenario, the building programs have been modified to accommodate only the unit that would be allowed under Proposition O provisions. In either case, these sites have been assumed to be developed in near-term.



TABLE 5

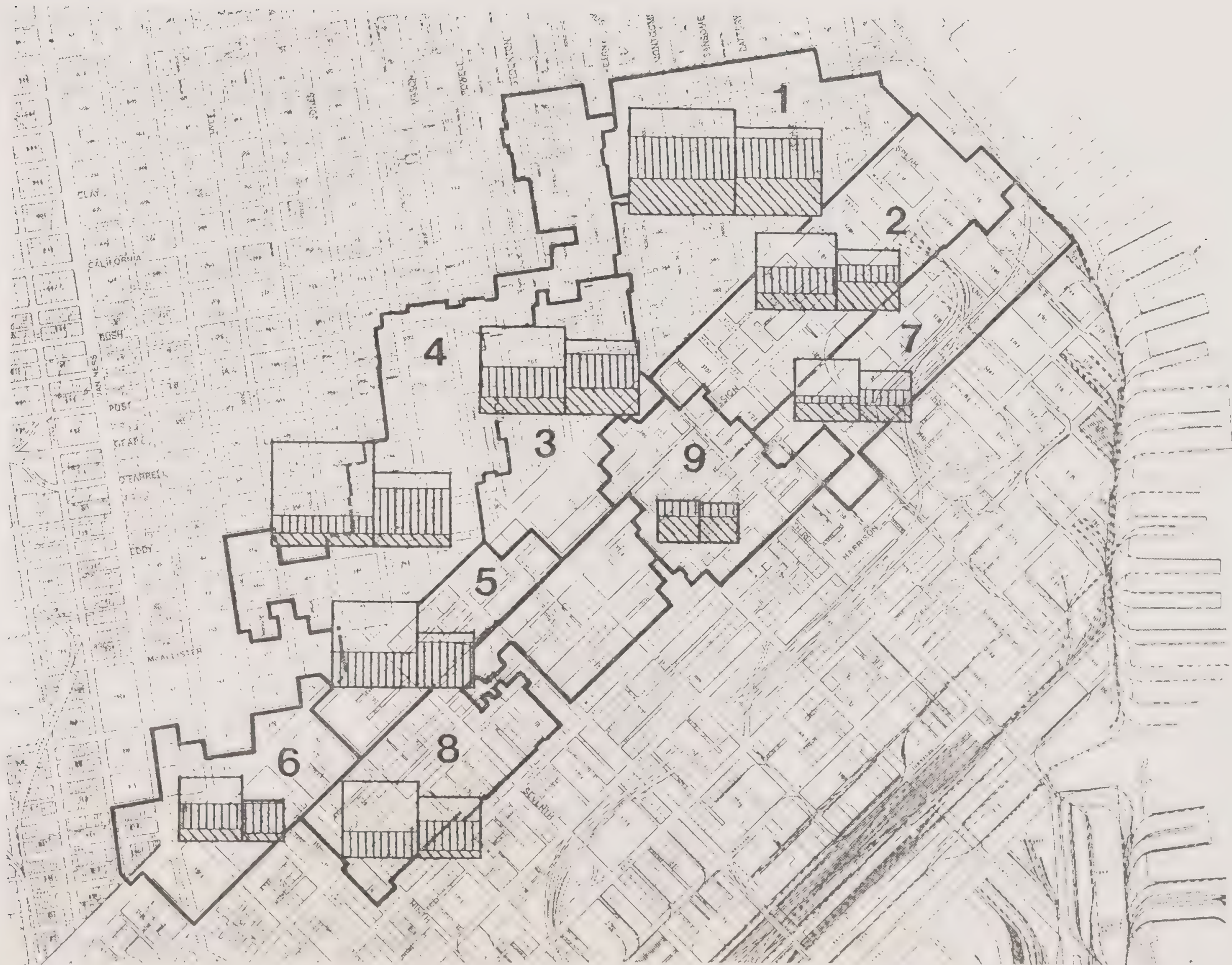
CURRENT C-3 ZONING DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO  
Allocation of Growth Estimates (in Million Square Feet)

Subarea	Allocation	Office	Retail	Hotel	Other	Total	Building Capacity	Absorption Rates (%)
1/C-3-O	Near-Term	4.81	0.29	0.42	--	5.52	17.47	31.6
	Long-Term	6.27	0.76	--	--	7.03		40.2
	Subtotal	11.08	1.05	0.42	--	12.55		71.8
2/C-3-O	Near-Term	0.97	0.01	--	0.72	1.70	9.95	17.1
	Long-Term	3.14	0.30	--	--	3.44		34.6
	Subtotal	4.11	0.31	--	0.72	5.14		51.7
3/C-3-R	Near-Term	0.50	0.18	--	--	2.14	12.03	17.8
	Long-Term	1.08	0.70	2.52	--	4.30		35.7
	Subtotal	1.58	1.38	3.48	--	6.44		53.5
4/C-3-G	Near-Term	--	0.21	1.44	--	1.65	16.44	10.0
	Long-Term	1.10	0.60	0.60	--	2.30		14.0
	Subtotal	1.10	0.81	2.04	--	3.95		24.0
5/C-3-G	Near-Term	--	--	--	0.20	0.20	10.57	1.9
	Long-Term	3.41	0.27	0.60	--	4.28		40.5
	Subtotal	3.41	0.27	0.60	0.20	4.48		42.4
6/C-3-G	Near-Term	1.38	--	--	--	1.38	6.34	21.8
	Long-Term	1.81	0.13	0.60	--	2.54		40.1
	Subtotal	3.19	0.13	0.60	--	3.92		61.8
7/C-3-S	Near-Term	0.37	0.06	--	1.08	1.51	6.30	24.0
	Long-Term	0.39	--	--	--	0.39		6.2
	Subtotal	0.76	0.06	--	1.08	1.90		30.2
8/C-3-S	Near-Term	--	--	--	--	--	8.68	0
	Long-Term	2.07	0.24	--	0.64	2.95		34.0
	Subtotal	2.07	0.24	--	0.64	2.95		34.0
9/YBC	Near-Term	0.73	0.46	0.42	--	1.61	2.70	59.6
	Long-Term	0.73	--	--	0.36	1.09		40.4
	Subtotal	1.46	0.46	0.42	0.36	2.70		100.0
TOTAL	Near-Term	8.76	1.71	3.24	2.00	15.71	90.48	17.4
	Long-Term	20.00	3.00	4.32	1.00	28.32		31.3
	Total	28.76	4.71	7.56	3.00	44.03		48.7

Notes: Approximately 6.34 million square feet of building space for which building permit applications have been filed are included in the Near-Term allocation. Approximately 4.53 million square feet now under construction are not included in the allocation chart--for breakdown, see Table 2: Building Capacity.







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## Figure 7 GROWTH SCENARIOS

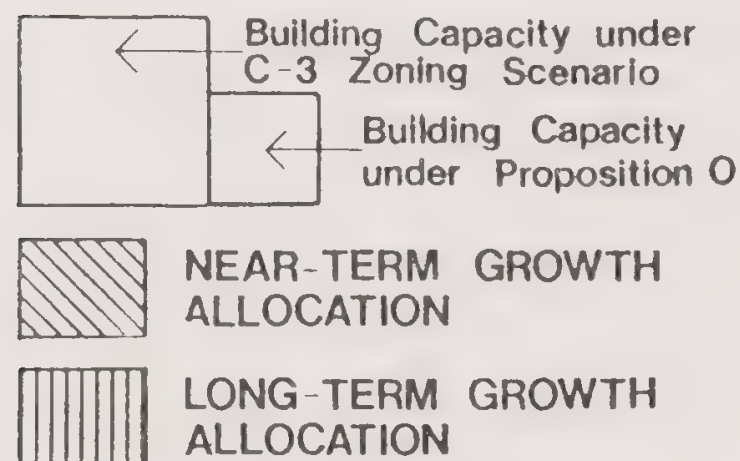


TABLE 6

### PROPOSITION "O" ZONING DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO Allocation of Growth Estimates (in Million Square Feet)

Subarea	Allocation	Office	Retail	Hotel	Other	Total	Building Capacity	Absorption Rates (%)
1/C-3-O	Near-Term	4.35	0.32	0.24	--	4.91	11.91	41.2
	Long-Term	4.78	0.69	--	--	5.47		45.9
	Subtotal	9.13	1.01	0.24	--	10.38		87.1
2/C-3-O	Near-Term	2.75	0.17	--	0.46	3.38	6.97	48.5
	Long-Term	1.27	0.34	--	--	1.61		23.1
	Subtotal	4.02	0.51	--	0.46	4.99		71.6
3/C-3-R	Near-Term	0.50	0.56	1.56	--	2.62	7.57	34.6
	Long-Term	1.21	0.88	1.41	--	3.50		46.2
	Subtotal	1.71	1.44	2.97	--	6.12		80.8
4/C-3-G	Near-Term	--	0.10	1.02	--	1.12	8.90	12.6
	Long-Term	4.06	0.60	1.02	--	5.68		63.8
	Subtotal	4.06	0.70	2.04	--	6.80		76.4
5/C-3-G	Near-Term	--	--	--	--	--	5.73	--
	Long-Term	2.70	0.25	1.59	0.17	4.71		82.2
	Subtotal	2.70	0.25	1.59	0.17	4.71		82.2
6/C-3-G	Near-Term	0.47	--	--	--	0.47	3.16	14.9
	Long-Term	2.08	0.13	0.30	--	2.51		79.4
	Subtotal	2.55	0.13	0.30	--	2.98		94.3
7/C-3-S	Near-Term	0.17	0.05	--	1.11	1.33	3.98	33.4
	Long-Term	0.93	0.01	--	0.10	1.04		26.1
	Subtotal	1.10	0.06	--	1.21	2.37		59.5
8/C-3-S	Near-Term	--	0.05	--	0.43	0.48	5.64	8.5
	Long-Term	2.45	0.10	--	0.37	2.92		51.8
	Subtotal	2.45	0.15	--	0.80	3.40		60.3
9/YBC	Near-Term	0.52	0.46	0.42	--	1.40	2.28	61.4
	Long-Term	0.52	--	--	0.36	0.88		38.6
	Subtotal	1.04	0.46	0.42	0.36	2.28		100.0
TOTAL	Near-Term	8.76	1.71	3.24	2.00	15.71	56.14	28.0
	Long-Term	20.00	3.00	4.32	1.00	28.32		50.4
	TOTAL	28.76	4.71	7.56	3.00	44.03		78.4

Notes: Approximately 4 million square feet of building space are included in the Near-Term allocation, as a modified program of those presently filed for building permits. Approximately 4.53 million square feet now under construction are not included in the allocation chart--for breakdown, see Table 3: Building Capacity.





- o The development allocation in the Yerba Buena Redevelopment Area, within the C-3 zone, reflects the buildings space programs developed by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency.
- o Existing buildings of historic and architectural merit have been assumed as developable sites where the building's assessed value is equal to or less than the assessed land value. (In such cases the base FAR is assumed for the Proposition O scenario.)
- o Assumed building heights have been based on consideration of the parcel size, overall floor area, and continued use of the C-3 bulk controls.

Figure 7 and Tables 5 and 6 show the development pattern under the two scenarios. Approximately 48.7 percent of the development capacity will be absorbed in the long-term under the continuation of the current C-3 zoning, while under the Proposition O provisions, 78.4 percent of the development capacity will be absorbed. In either scenario, the financial district will be nearing the build-out of its capacity by the end of the period. The Tenderloin district, which is not a prime site for office, hotel, or retail location at the present time, will be redeveloped sooner in the Proposition O scenario than in the C-3, as the demand for more developable land accelerates under Proposition O. Detailed analysis of these two scenarios is discussed in Section 3.





# 3 GROWTH AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

The scenarios presented in the preceding section can help to identify the problems created by Downtown growth. Once these problems have been identified, we can determine the types of planning responses needed, the scope and content of the Downtown Conservation and Development Plan, and the kind of implementation program that should accompany the plan.

Each sub-section below summarizes the problems identified in the scenarios. Problems range from increased congestion, obstruction of sunlight, and increased fiscal imbalance to loss of opportunities for providing open space and for retaining historic or architecturally significant buildings. Also contained in each sub-section is a list of planning implications, which provide the basis for subsequent sections dealing with the content and scope of the Downtown Conservation and Development Program and the interim controls.

The scenarios presented in Section 2 are not intended as predictions of what will happen, but as indications of what might happen. For example, in terms of housing, which is discussed below, if new development were situated somewhat differently from what is assumed in the scenarios, the number of displaced housing units could be different. Exact numbers, however, are less important than the potential for major displacement. Similarly, in the documentation of visual impacts, the scenarios have assumed likely conditions, not the worst conditions.

## LAND USE

### ISSUES

Recent analyses of capacity and demand indicate that there are sufficient buildable sites available in Downtown to accommodate estimated long-term growth. The terms of Proposition O, however, would produce a less concentrated land use pattern and consume 31 percent more land for new development than the C-3 scenario. (See Table 7 and Figure 8). This added consumption of land has obvious housing, landmark preservation, and transportation implications, which are addressed more fully in the sections that follow.











# Figure 8 LAND SUPPLY ABSORPTION PATTERN

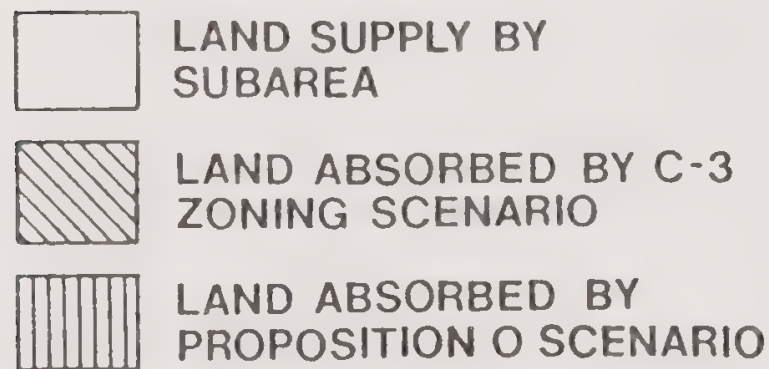


TABLE 7  
LAND SUPPLY ABSORPTION RATES (Excludes 7.12 Acres now under construction)

SUBAREA	SUPPLY	NEAR-TERM		LONG-TERM		TOTAL	
	Acres	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%
<u>C-3</u>							
1	25.60	9.09	35.5	9.43	36.8	18.52	72.3
2	17.07	5.23	30.6	4.89	28.6	10.12	59.3
3	19.90	3.67	18.4	7.05	35.4	10.73	53.9
4	31.45	3.17	10.1	4.41	14.0	7.58	24.1
5	20.22	0.30	1.5	8.20	40.6	8.50	42.0
6	12.67	3.17	25.0	4.87	38.4	8.04	63.5
7	14.00	2.80	20.0	0.90	6.4	3.70	26.4
8	19.93	--	--	6.77	34.0	6.77	34.0
9	- - - -	YBC Excluded:		100% Absorption Assumed		- - - -	- - - -
Total	160.84	27.43	17.1	46.52	28.9	73.95	46.0
<u>Prop O</u>							
1	25.60	10.97	42.9	11.41	44.6	22.38	87.4
2	17.07	9.60	56.2	3.35	19.6	12.95	75.8
3	19.90	6.52	32.8	9.46	47.5	15.98	80.3
4	31.45	3.93	12.5	19.99	63.6	23.92	76.1
5	20.22	--	--	16.51	81.7	16.51	81.7
6	12.67	3.17	25.0	8.86	69.9	12.03	94.9
7	14.00	4.45	31.8	3.67	26.2	8.13	58.1
8	19.93	1.56	7.8	10.35	51.9	11.91	59.8
9	- - - -	YBC Excluded:		100% Absorption Assumed		- - - -	- - - -
Total	160.84	40.20	25.0	83.61	52.0	123.81	77.0







The areas most likely to be affected by the increase in land demand are the Tenderloin and mid-Market (Fifth to Eighth Streets), because as the number of available sites in the C-3-O area declines, growth would be channeled to these areas. In addition, projected demand for hotel rooms, combined with reduced capacity in the C-3-R district, would channel some of this demand into the adjoining C-3-G district, which already accommodates this function.

Under Proposition O, the development (and redevelopment) potential of some land would be reduced and would initially diminish in value. However, because of the growing scarcity of land with development potential, values would increase over time more rapidly than they might otherwise. Eventually land would be valued more highly under Proposition O.

It is difficult to determine how the reduction of floor areas and heights under Proposition O will affect decisions to locate Downtown. Firms seeking a large and highly visible "monument" could be discouraged. But were the present emphasis on size to shift to architectural quality or historic character, firms might continue to find the Downtown attractive. Firms might also find that they value the Downtown's environment and social amenities, which constraints on development should help maintain.

In the long-term, a restricted supply of space resulting from less land and higher rents would make it more difficult for firms to move into or within the Downtown. Firms that cannot increase their prices enough to offset rent increases will either have to accept decreasing profit margins or move from Downtown--partially or entirely.

Exactly when the effects of a restricted land supply might be felt is difficult to determine. As shown in Table 6, only about 25 percent of the floor area permitted by Proposition O remains after assigning the estimated long-term growth to the potential land supply. Available land will, however, expand during this period, for as land values rise, more land will become economically underutilized. This is especially true in areas such as south of Market and the Tenderloin, where land values are now substantially lower than C-3-O and C-3-R properties.

Some spillover into other areas where land values and rents are lower, such as the south of Market and Tenderloin, could occur. Spillover could also occur in the C-2 zoned commercial areas of the city. Spillover is most likely to occur in the Van Ness corridor, where current zoning allows a base FAR of 10, with allowances for increases up to 12.5 for corner lots, and maximum heights of 130 feet. Properties in this area would have a development capacity in excess of that allowed by Proposition O in the C-3-R, -S, and -G districts. Height restrictions in the C-2 area along Columbus Avenue would discourage movement in that direction.



## PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

The Downtown Plan must provide a more complete analysis of the relationship between land supply and development capacity as affected by development regulations. This analysis should look beyond the Downtown to C-2 zoned lands and the south of Market area lying outside the C-3 districts. The analysis should also reexamine land uses in the Downtown as a whole and in its various districts. Some major questions that should be addressed are:

- o What level of growth should be permitted in the C-3 district? Will the level require expansion, contraction of the C-3 district, or the use of other techniques to govern the rate of growth?
- o Which land uses should be given preference in the Downtown? Will this require major changes in land use regulations and in the boundaries of the four C-3 zones and adjoining zoning districts?
- o Are adjustments in the FAR (either C-3 or Proposition O) needed to mitigate adverse affects created by FAR provisions that are too lax or too tight?

More specific implications related to these general land use and economic questions are discussed below.

## TRANSPORTATION

### ISSUES

Potential development in Downtown would generate a large volume of additional travel. There is no significant difference between the transportation requirements of existing C-3 zoning and the amendments contained in Proposition O. The assumed increases in floor space and employment would increase the number of Downtown daily work trips by about 25 percent in the near term (about 1985) and 60 percent in the long term (about 20 years hence).

In the near term additional travel would be accommodated by changes in the travel routines. A greater number of person trips would be handled on existing roadways, even those operating at capacity, due to increases in carpooling brought about by rising energy costs, higher parking fees, and more congestion. The peak period of travel would also be spread out as a result of flex-time programs and staggered hours. At the same time, congestion and energy costs will lead to increased usage





of transit and moderate increases in the transit capacity of the Muni, BART, and Golden Gate systems. However, severe congestion now occurs frequently on most parts of the traffic and transit systems, and congestion could be expected to last even longer during the 1985 peak periods.

If Downtown growth were to reach the long-term estimate, substantial transit improvements and changes for traffic, parking, and pedestrians would be required. It is unlikely that any significant increase in peak-period auto traffic volumes could occur beyond 1985 because of limits on the existing system of streets, highways, and bridges. Even if capacity limitations could be overcome by building new traffic facilities, the problems and costs involved in handling parking and circulation in Downtown and in other parts of the city would make it unfeasible to increase auto traffic capacity.

Therefore, virtually all travel generated by new Downtown development beyond 1985 would have to be accommodated on public transportation. By 2000 or thereabouts, the capacity of the existing transit services would have to increase drastically, probably by 50 to 100 percent. Figure 9 shows estimated increases in travel demand in person trips from the present to 1985, as well as the major travel corridors and means of travel. Figure 10 shows the corresponding increases from the present to about the year 2000. Due to housing constraints in San Francisco, an increasing proportion of Downtown workers are expected to live outside the city. This will lead to major increases in metropolitan travel, particularly from the East Bay.

Facilitating the increase in transit ridership would require major improvements in transit accommodations. The increase in transit riders in the Marin corridor would require 310 buses during the peak hours; on the Bay Bridge, the increase would require 285 more buses during the peak period. It would also be necessary to bring BART up to its planned capacity.

Increases in buses serving Downtown would require changes in Downtown streets and along the major approach routes, which would require major new public investments and resolution of air quality issues. Coordination of the various elements of the regional transit system would need to be improved. Competition and overlapping of regional transit lines reduce the efficiency of operation, limit capacity, increase costs, and lessen convenience to transit users.

Also complicating the provision of adequate transportation is the absence of controls and programs to maintain a balance between traffic generated by new development and the provision of new transportation facilities and services. For instance, 4.53 million square feet of office space is now under construction, and



another 6.3 million square feet approved or submitted for approval. This represents about four or five years of growth that is or could easily be committed within the next year. Yet there are no corresponding transportation improvements scheduled to accommodate this increase. Thus increases in congestion do not serve as a deterrent to development, since the development decisions precede the transportation problems which they generate.

It would be possible to increase transit capacity to meet or exceed demand by introducing improvements as follows:

- o providing bus or rail connections from the Bay Bridge to the Embarcadero, to Market Street, and to Fort Mason
- o transferring from Golden Gate buses to an expanded Muni service near the south end of the Golden Gate Bridge
- o increasing capacity of BART, possibly by adopting manual control to achieve shorter headways
- o redesigning the James Lick and I-280 ramp systems to clarify and improve access to parking areas south of Downtown and eliminate hazardous conditions on the approach to the Bay Bridge.

In brief, the transportation requirements of development estimated for the long term could be met through substantial transit improvements with a properly coordinated plan and program. However, the transit improvement program required to support the potential Downtown growth to the year 2000 would call for major expenditures, and the costs and benefits of such a program should be evaluated.

## PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

The high degree of interrelation between land use planning and regulation and transportation make imperative a thorough investigation of these interactions throughout the Downtown planning program. Basic questions which must be asked and addressed are:

- o Should development be limited to be compatible with transportation capacity, or transportation capacity be expanded to accommodate expected Downtown growth? (To address this question will require a more thorough analysis of the relationship between transportation improvement costs (both capital expenditures and on-going operational costs) and various growth levels. It





Figure 9  
NEAR-TERM INCREASE  
OF PERSON TRIPS -  
[ P.M. PEAK ]

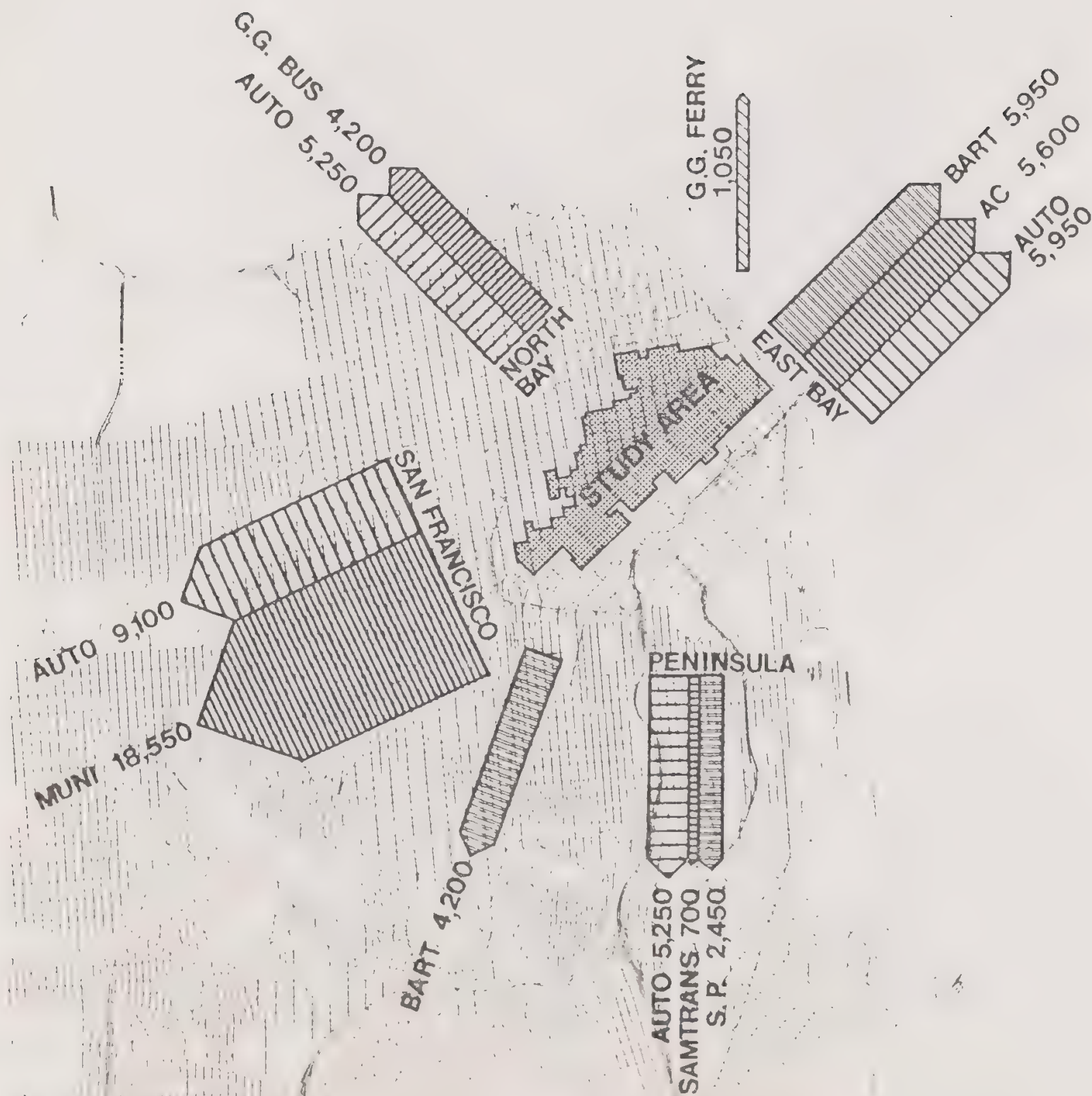
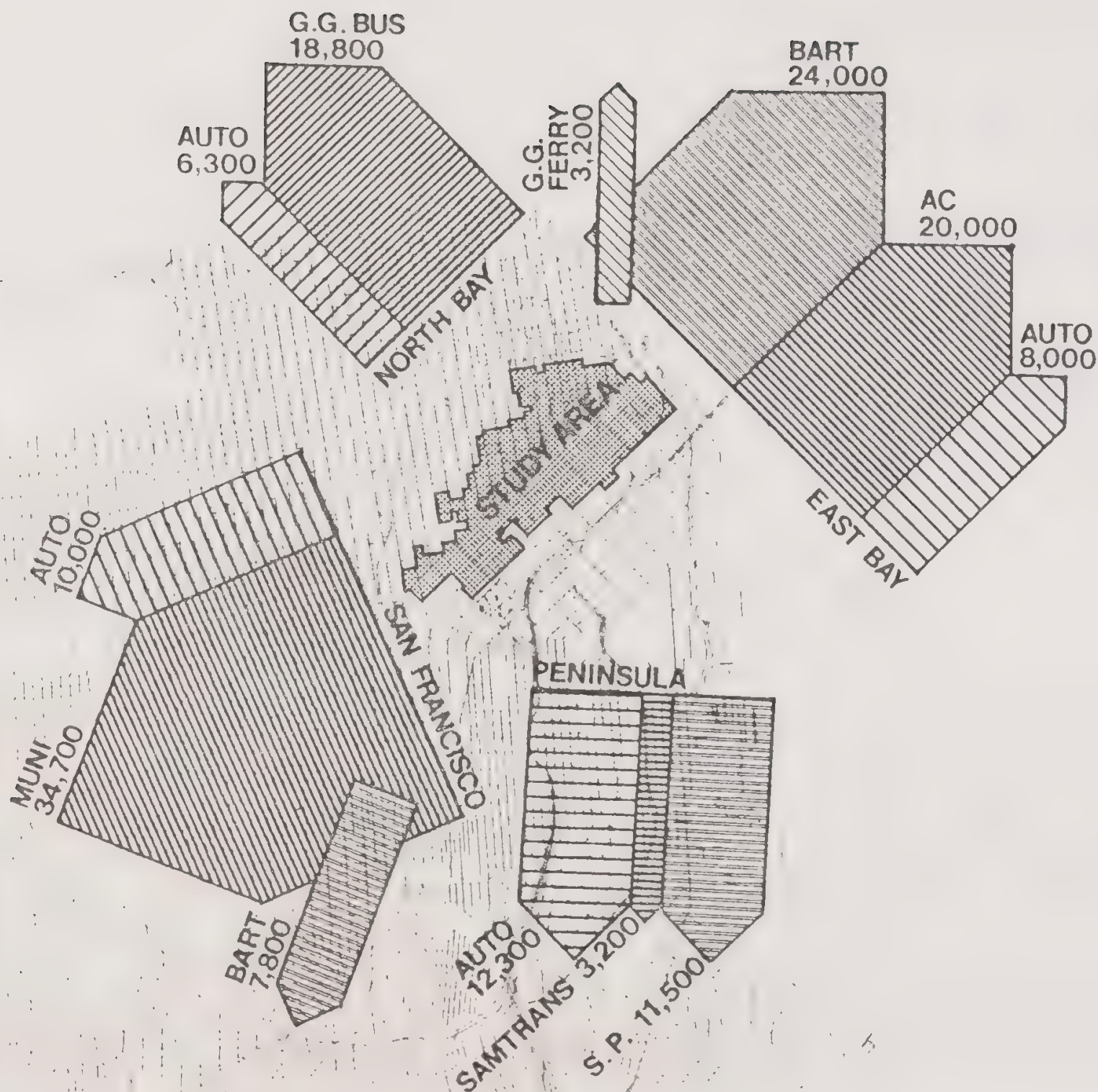




Figure 10  
LONG-TERM INCREASE  
OF PERSON TRIPS -  
[ P.M. PEAK ]







will also require determining the means to finance the needed improvements and establishing the institutional arrangements necessary for proper operation of the transportation services.)

- o What should the policy be regarding future use of private automobiles? What are the implications for the land use, urban design, and transportation decisions to be made in the Downtown Plan?
- o What changes are required in the function of Downtown streets to accommodate the new levels of transit and pedestrian uses? What land use implications does this have? What are the design implications?
- o What type of land use controls can be instituted to help ensure that development decisions are coordinated with transportation improvements? (The object here would be to avoid levels of development that cannot be accommodated without severe congestion and adverse affects on Downtown workers and residents in travel corridors serving Downtown.)

## URBAN DESIGN

### ISSUES

This section deals with the physical appearance of Downtown San Francisco resulting from the current C-3 zoning regulations and Proposition O and implications for the broader issue of design. Regulations that influence the appearance, visual quality, and physical characteristics of the Downtown environment concern the type and location of use, height, bulk, intensity of development (expressed through the FAR), and other features such as those pertaining to bonus FARs for provision of public amenities.

Major items discussed in this section include skyline views, streetscape, open space, shadow patterns, and view corridors. Since aesthetic considerations are determined by individual perceptions of the environment and the values placed upon it, the discussion is followed by a series of sketches illustrating typical physical changes that might occur.



## Skyline

As noted in Section 1, the current C-3 regulations permit a building height of up to 700 feet (or approximately 50 stories) in the office district, where a considerable amount of development can still be absorbed. The maximum height limit of Proposition O is 260 feet (or approximately 20 stories), which, combined with the proposed reduction in FAR, significantly reduces the building capacity in Downtown. The general patterns of development anticipated are those under the C-3 regulations. New development will probably be concentrated in the C-3-O and C-3-R districts and along Market Street. Under Proposition O, new developments are likely to be dispersed throughout all four C-3 districts and possibly beyond. The skyline views of the Downtown will be significantly altered if the current C-3 regulations remain in effect, but changes will be less significant if Proposition O is instituted. As shown in Figures 11 and 12 tradeoffs are apparent: major skyline changes for the C-3 scenario versus little skyline changes for the Proposition O scenario; little change in spaces between buildings for the former case versus a tighter, congested development pattern for the latter.

Both sets of regulations will have the effect of weakening the distinction between Downtown and Nob Hill. The C-3 regulations would produce major alteration of the views from Nob Hill, Telegraph Hill, and Potrero Hill. In these latter instances new development would block views through the building masses of Downtown and eliminate views of major natural and cityscape features beyond Downtown. Proposition O regulations would result in a low, uniform mass of buildings throughout the C-3-G and C-3-S districts. The distant views of the hills would thus be kept open to motorists on freeways and greater visual emphasis would be given to the financial district. However, little visual demarcation would be provided for those areas outside of the financial district.

## Streetscape

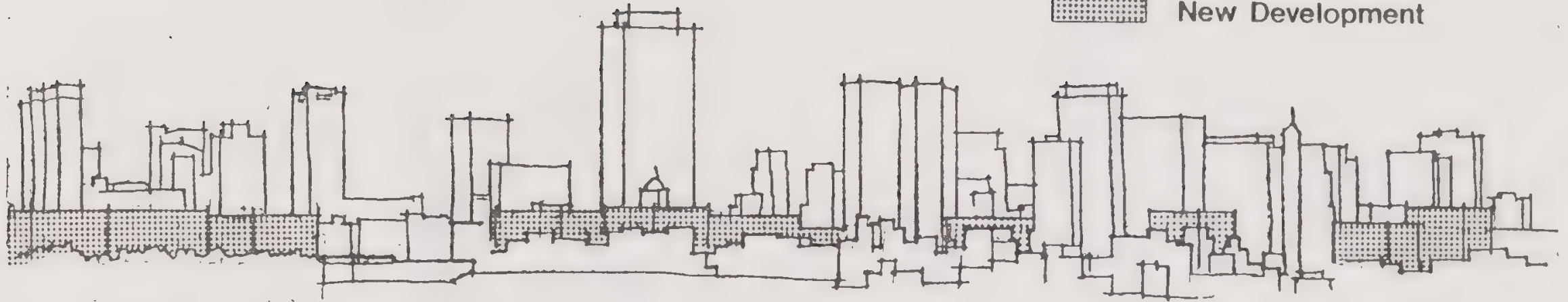
While the skyline views are perceived from distant vantage points, streetscape surrounds us. Streetscape--the building facades, sidewalks, fenestrations, street furniture, signs and lights, and sometimes vegetation--and the activities along the street provide the city's ambience. Placement of a parking garage with no pedestrian amenities on a street characterized by retail frontage (shops and restaurants) is disruptive. While the two scenarios formulated in Section 2 assumed retail uses on the street level for most developments, it is important to note that the Proposition O scenario, which will consume more land, has a greater potential for disruption of streetscape (for better or worse) than the C-3 scenario (see Figures 13, 14, 15, and 16).



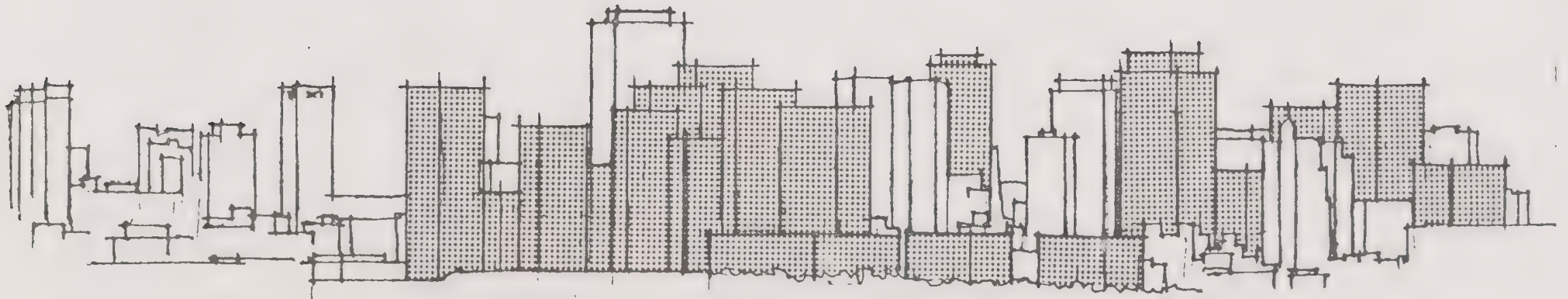


Figure 11: VIEW OF RETAIL AND  
FINANCIAL DISTRICTS FROM  
JAMES LICK SKYWAY EASTBOUND  
LOOKING NORTH

 New Development



PROPOSITION O



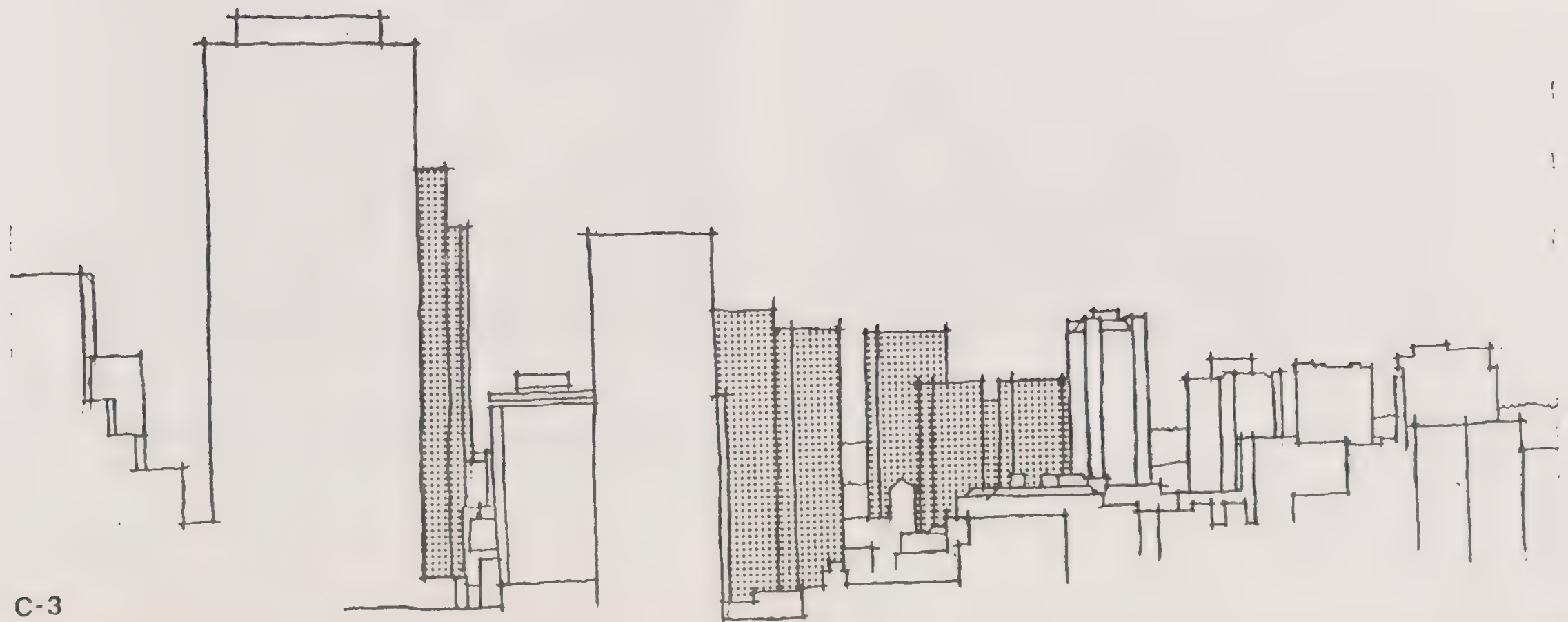
C-3



Figure 2: VIEW OF RETAIL  
DISTRICT FROM TELEGRAPH  
HILL LOOKING SOUTH. BANK  
OF AMERICA AT LEFT.



PROPOSITION O



C-3







PROPOSITION O SCENARIO

MARKET STREET—FROM THE SOUTHWEST



C-3 SCENARIO

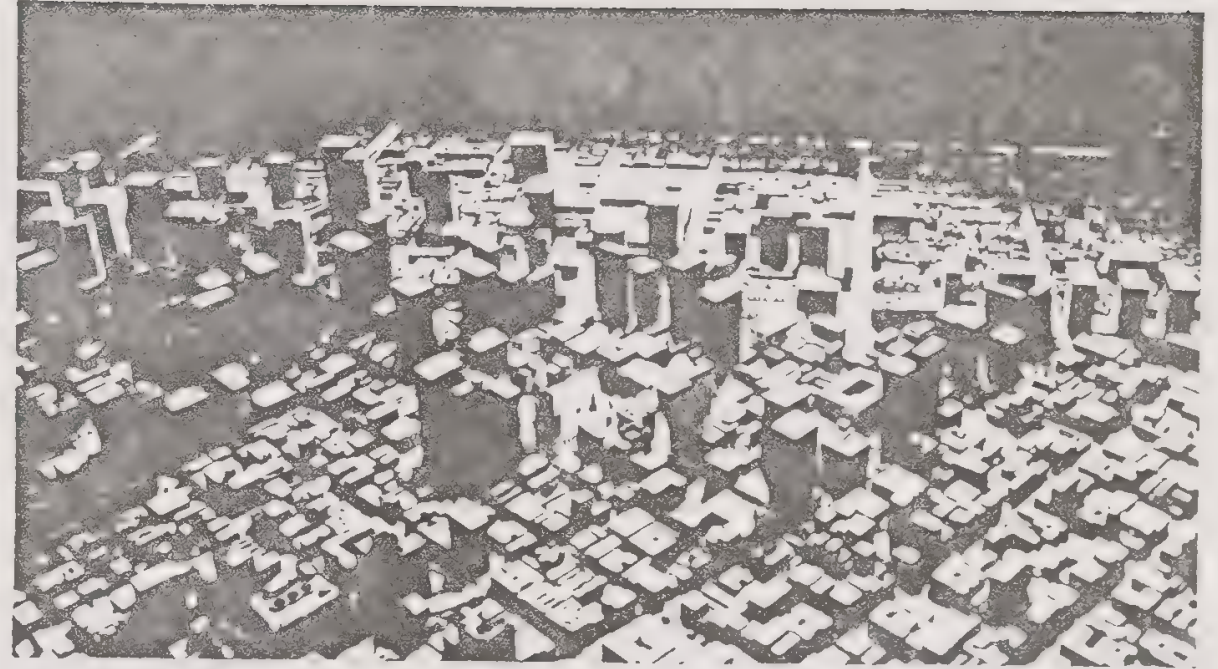




## UNION SQUARE AREA – FROM THE NORTHWEST



PROPOSITION O SCENARIO



C-3 SCENARIO

## FINANCIAL DISTRICT – FROM THE NORTHWEST



PROPOSITION O SCENARIO



C-3 SCENARIO





## Open Space

Major public open spaces in the Downtown area include Union Square, the Civic Center and United Nations plazas, and the wide sidewalks and BART station plazas along Market Street. In addition, there are a number of plazas and parks throughout Downtown that have been created by developments in the past decade as part of features to obtain FARs. Despite the amount actually available in the Downtown, the area appears to lack open space. This is due in part to the lack of linkages--or a landscape network connecting all of these parks and plazas, as well as the lack of sufficient regulations to protect and enhance them. The need for the latter is apparent, as illustrated in the case of Giannini plaza located on the northern side of the tall and massive Bank of America building, which is effectively shadowed by the building for which the plaza was to serve as a front court.

## Shadow Patterns

Because of San Francisco's climate, shadow effects are critical throughout the year. Open pedestrian spaces and historic and architecturally significant buildings are particularly vulnerable to these impacts. Field observation has shown that the plazas along Market Street will be in danger of being completely shadowed during lunch hours (when their level of use is the highest), unless siting and height of structures to the south are carefully controlled. The C-3 scenario, which would result in a smaller number of buildings, will probably affect these plazas and pedestrian amenities because structures are likely to be tall. The Proposition O scenario, which will result in a larger number of buildings and a more congested Downtown, will affect them. Major reduction in sunlight and reflected light along the major retail streets of Downtown, such as Sutter, Polk, and Grant, is also likely if development is permitted under either the C-3 or Proposition O regulations.

## Views and View Corridors

Views and view corridors (such as California Street and Pine Street, looking toward the Bay and the Bay Bridge) are protected by the height and bulk controls. With new development anticipated to the south of Market Street, where blocks are larger than those to the north, these controls will become particularly important (see Figure 17).





EXISTING

Figure 13

View of Market Street from the intersection of Grant Avenue will not change much under Proposition O because the building heights for the new structures will be in the range of 130 to 150 feet (or approximately 10 to 12 stories). However, if the current C-3 zoning regulations were to remain as is, the character of the Market Street corridor would change dramatically--the height limits are in the range of 240 to 400 feet (or approximately 20 to 30 stories). Wide sidewalks and plazas along Market Street could be shadowed by these new structures.



PROPOSITION O



C-3 ZONING







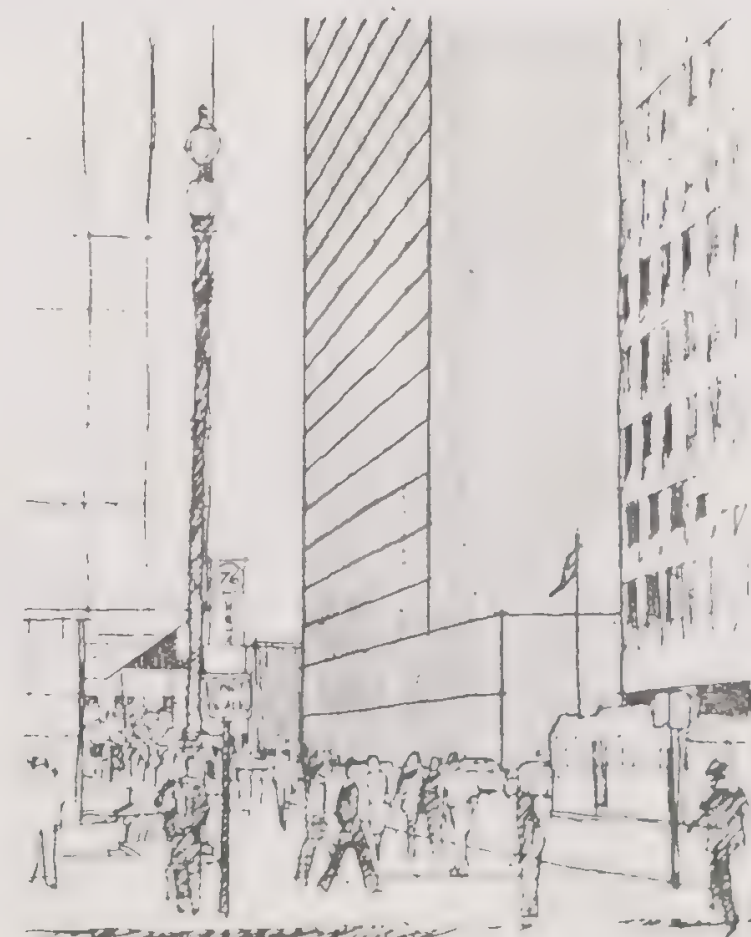
EXISTING

## Figure 14

This set of sketches showing a view of Fremont Street from Market looking toward south illustrates possible new development (shaded) to the south of Market in the C-3 district. Small scale buildings that front Fremont Street will be replaced by a large structure(s)--260 feet high under Proposition O and 500 to 600 feet under the C-3 scenario--obstructing the view of the sky and casting shadows on Fremont, and in the core of C-3 alternative, on the north side of Market Street.



PROPOSITION O

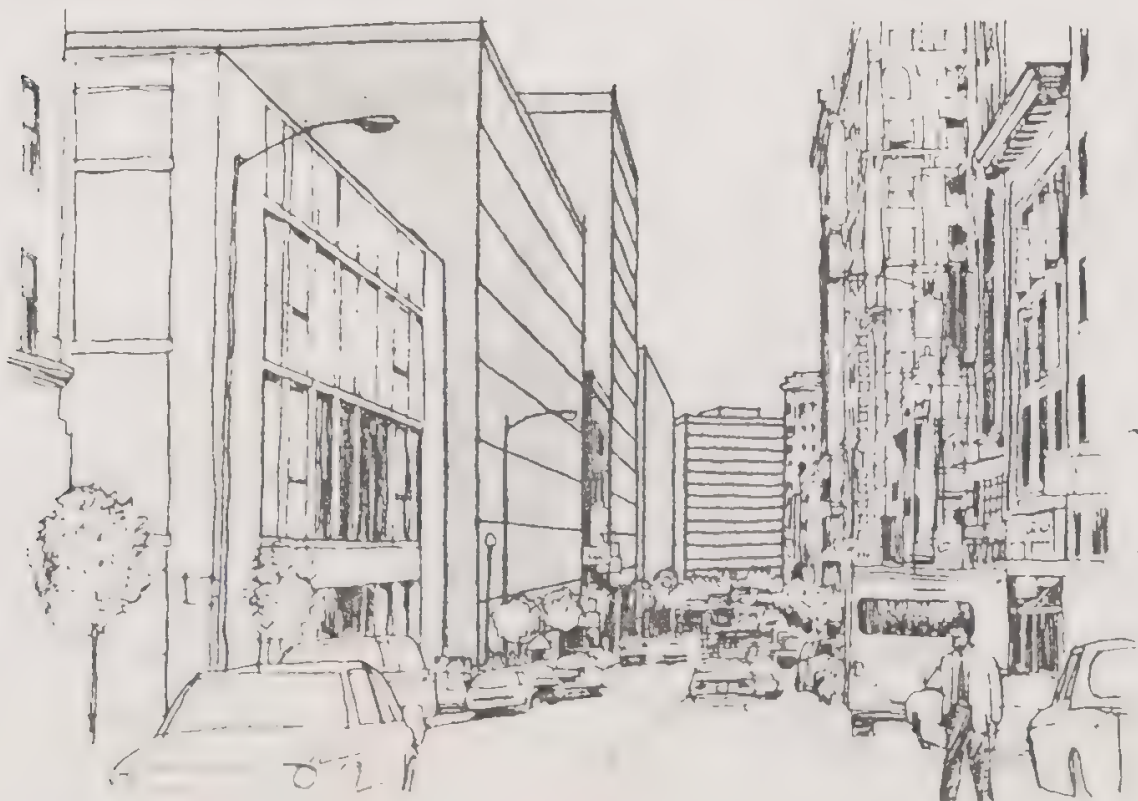


C-3 ZONING





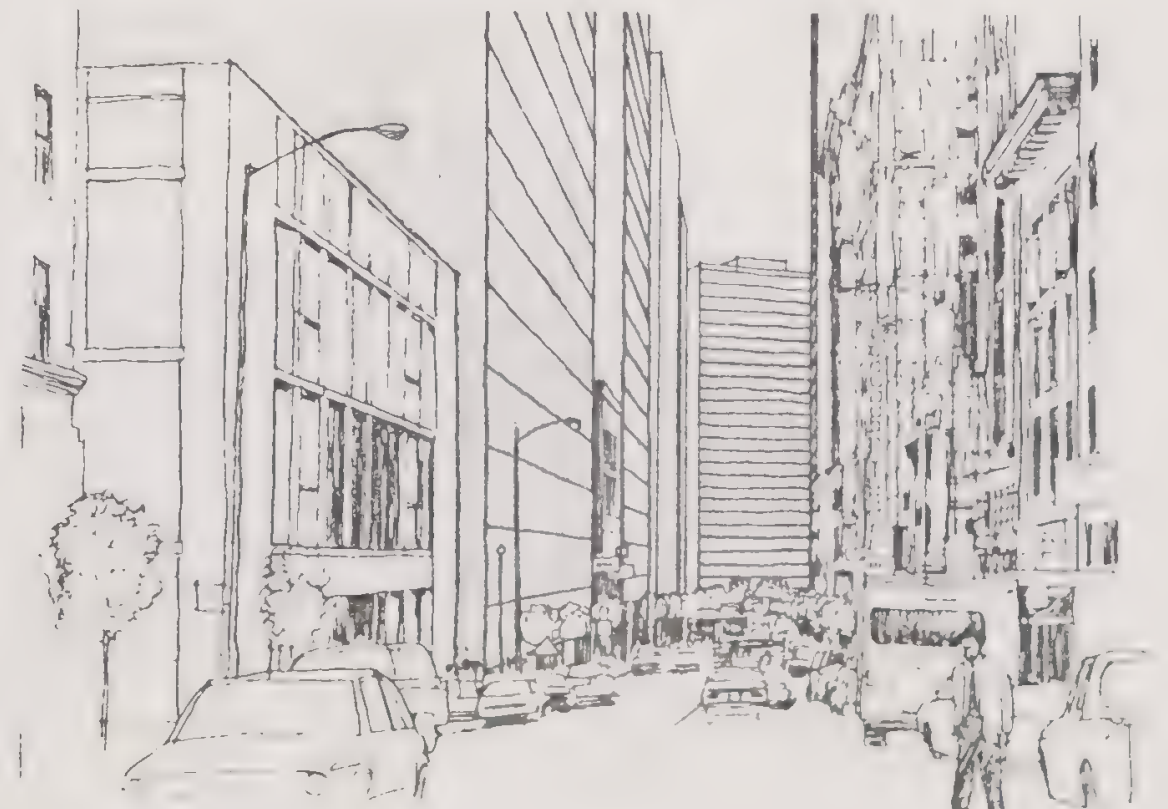
EXISTING



PROPOSITION O

Figure 15

Grant Avenue in the heart of the retail and historic area in Downtown should be protected to preserve its character. As illustrated in the sketches, however, the area could undergo major changes in either C-3 or Proposition O scenarios. Landmark buildings could be demolished, streets will be dark during the day, shadowed by tall buildings, and history and ambience of San Francisco lost. The view is taken from Grant Avenue at Bush looking toward Market Street.



C-3 ZONING







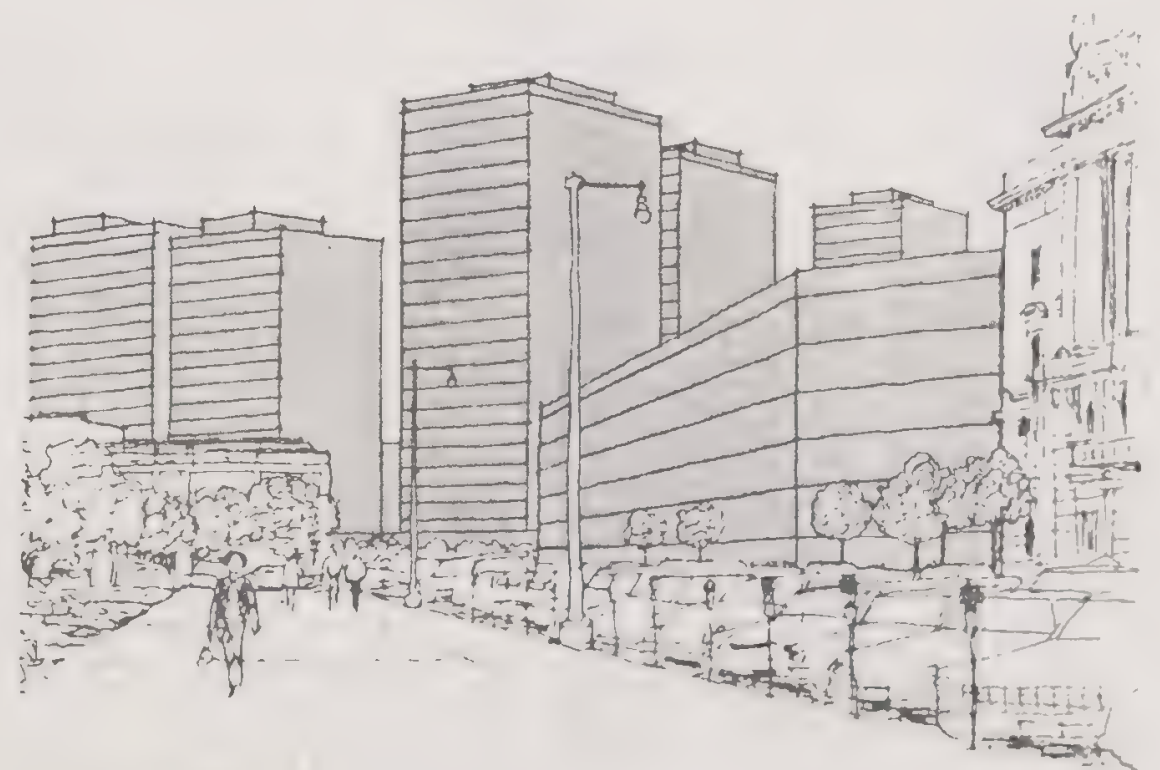
EXISTING



PROPOSITION O

## Figure 16

In the vicinity of the Civic Center, the impact of new development along Market Street can be significant. While Proposition O will limit the height of new development to 130 feet, development is likely to occur sooner. New developments under the C-3 zoning could be as high as 240 feet. This particular view is from the Civic Center plaza on the corner of Grove Street at Polk, looking toward Market Street.



C-3 ZONING

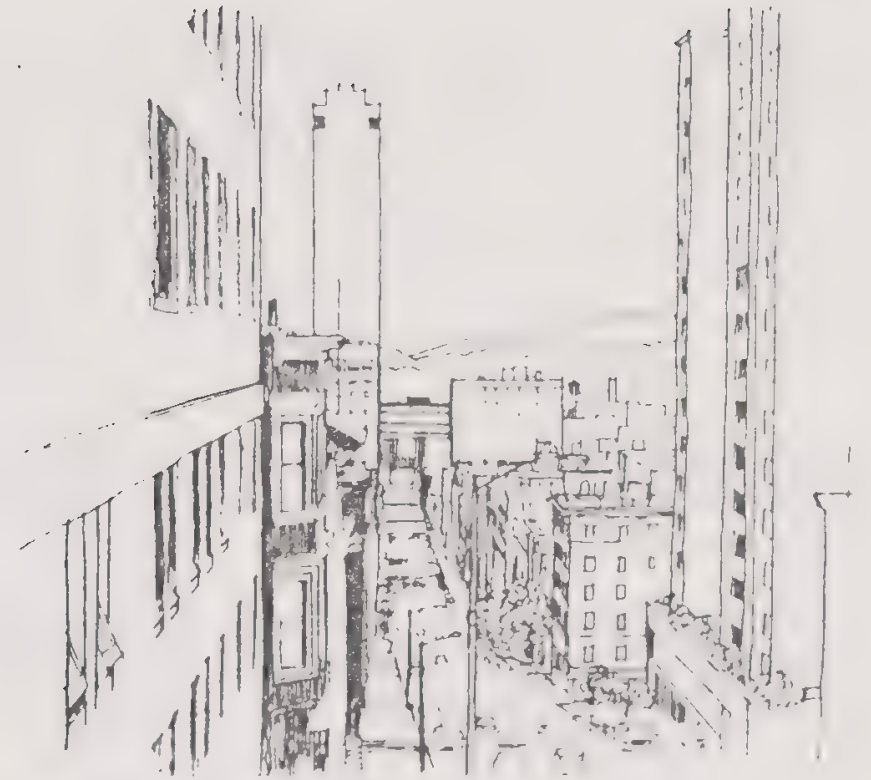




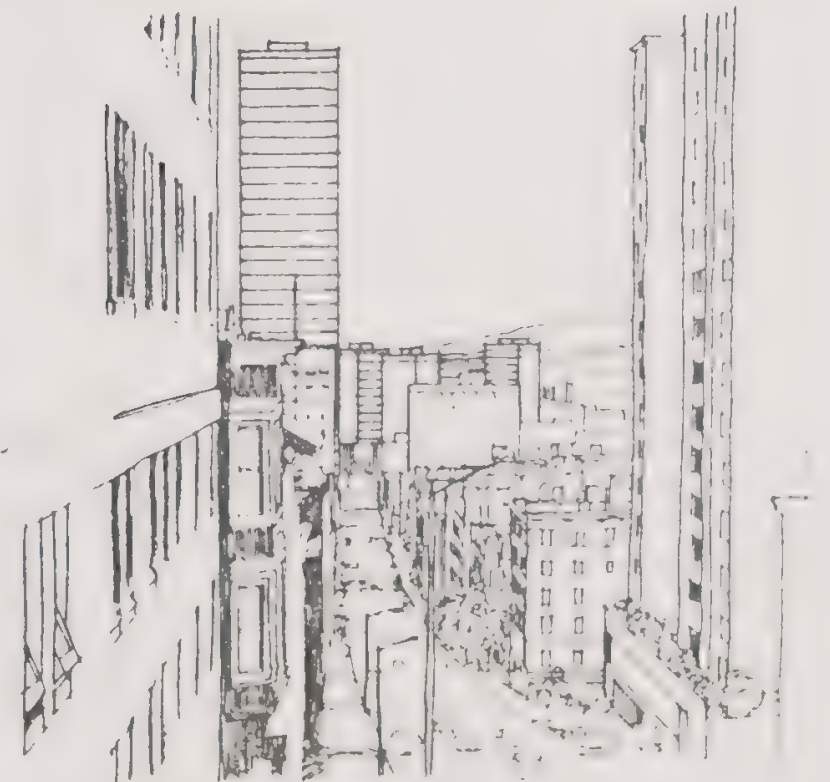
EXISTING

## Figure 17

As shown in this Nob Hill view down Taylor Street toward Market Street there will be major differences in the visual impacts of the C-3 and Proposition O. Under C-3 assumptions building heights permitted in the C-3-R and C-3-G would obscure long distance views from Nob Hill of Potrero Hill. The more restrictive height controls of Proposition O would minimize obstruction of long distance views from the area.



PROPOSITION O



C-3 ZONING





## PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

Urban design is concerned with the interrelationships of all the Downtown elements (land use types and location; building height, bulk, and density; open space; historic and architectural resources; transportation) and parts (districts, special areas, linkages) that constitute the physical setting for Downtown.

The urban design questions that need to be addressed in the Downtown Plan include:

- o What is the role of the Downtown in terms of its physical and visual image? What is its relationship to other parts of the city?
- o What should be the scale and character of Downtown? To what extent is this to be determined by existing conditions? How might it vary from one area to another within Downtown?
- o What degree of protection should be afforded Downtown's historic and architectural resources? What design requirements and guidelines are needed to promote an acceptable relationship between these landmark buildings and new development.
- o What changes in design might be necessitated by changes in land use policies or proposed transportation improvements?
- o What methods are available to regulate building design so that objectives pertaining to an improved Downtown environment can be achieved? Should the bonus approach be dropped and replaced with more direct methods?
- o What are the open space needs of Downtown? What actions are needed to meet these needs? What design direction is needed to ensure adequate design and functioning of these spaces?

In brief, urban design studies must be interwoven with all other studies and analyses done as part of the Downtown Plan. The urban design provisions cannot be added after all the major decisions are made, but must instead be central to all these decisions. Moreover, the urban design provisions cannot be a set of generally applicable principles, but, rather, specific responses to Downtown conditions, which will then become part of the plan and its implementing regulations and programs.



## HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURALLY SIGNIFICANT STRUCTURES

### ISSUES

San Francisco's historic and architecturally significant buildings are the main contributors to the attractiveness and liveliness of the city's Downtown. These structures lend visual richness to the streetscape, provide a record of the city's history, and bring a more human scale to the Downtown streets through the pattern of light and shadow they produce.

The Downtown's recent development history has demonstrated the vulnerability of landmark buildings and the inability of the current C-3 regulations to deal with these issues. In fact, evidence suggests that the C-3 regulations are contributing to the demolition of historic structures. The increased development potential provided by the C-3 base FAR, coupled with opportunities for additional FAR bonus, often makes it advantageous for a developer to demolish a landmark building to achieve a greater amount of floor space.

Bonus features have been incorporated in Proposition O to prohibit transfer of the unused permitted floor space from a landmark site to an adjacent development site. Proposition O's "landmark bonus" allows for additional floor space to be constructed on a development site within 500 feet of a designated landmark if the landmark building is preserved in perpetuity. A floor area bonus would be granted equal to 50,000 square feet or the floor area of the landmark, whichever is greater, up to a maximum of 100,000 square feet. In no event, however, may the floor area bonus result in total floor space on the development site exceeding an established maximum (which varies in the four C-3 districts).

Many factors would determine whether these provisions will help safeguard landmark buildings. At this time we do not know how other bonuses for encouragement of energy conservation and improvement of the pedestrian environment would be applied. If bonuses are liberally granted for these latter purposes, incentive for use of the landmark bonus is seriously undermined. The initiative attempts to avoid this problem by denying bonuses to any site on which a landmark building has been demolished. An analysis of potential sites, however, reveals ways around these provisions. When land assemblage for new construction takes place, a landmark site could be left out of the initial development application and be subsequently demolished and rebuilt. In this way the initial portion of the project would be eligible for a bonus while the landmark site would be rebuilt at the maximum FAR. The net result may be a total FAR equivalent to or greater than possible that with the landmark bonus.














Figure 18  
HISTORIC  
ARCHITECTURAL  
RESOURCES



-  A & B RATED  
STRUCTURES ON  
POTENTIAL DEVELOP-  
MENT PARCELS
-  C RATED  
STRUCTURES ON  
POTENTIAL DEVELOP-  
MENT PARCELS
-  OTHER A, B, & C  
RATED STRUCTURES

SCALE IN FEET  north





The most effective feature of Proposition O is the downward adjustment of the permitted floor area. When this adjustment results in a permitted floor area approximately the same as or substantially less than the landmark site, the economic incentive for demolition is seriously diminished. Yet even in this situation, the potential for demolition remains. The Fitzhugh and City of Paris sites are examples of new building space that is less than the preexisting space. There thus remains the possibility that construction of less but more efficiently organized space will be economically more desirable.

There are other potential abuses of the landmark bonus which could thwart the intent of the bonus. For instance, landmark floor area, which in all likelihood would not be demolished, could transfer 100,000 square feet of floor space to a nearby development site.

The degree of vulnerability of landmark buildings is demonstrated in Figure 18 where buildings are rated either A or B according to the Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage. In those portions of the C-3 zone not included in the Heritage survey, buildings were rated in the City Planning Department survey with a somewhat equivalent 1 and 2 designation. Also shown in the figure are those landmark buildings which appeared as part of the available land supply because of a low ratio of improvements to the value of the land. Some 47 A and 75 B buildings fall into this category, suggesting a high degree of vulnerability.

The evaluation of the scenarios provides an additional indication of the threat to landmark buildings. Under Proposition O the impact in terms of number of buildings displaced is numerically greater than under current C-3 regulations due to the increased demand for land. Under the C-3 regulations, however, the threat to larger scale landmark buildings, which constitute a major portion of the A buildings, is increased. The table below shows the conclusions of the scenario analysis.

Landmark Rating	Total Buildings in Category	Demolished Under C-3 Assumptions	Demolished Under Proposition O Assumptions
A	102	14	30
B	170	25	51
C	279	22	52

It should be noted that in some cases the initiative landmark bonus might be applied to safeguard some buildings assumed in the scenario to be demolished; but as noted



above, the effectiveness of this bonus is highly speculative. The major conclusion to be drawn from this analysis is not that one alternative is preferable to another, but that the issue of protecting landmark buildings remains to be resolved.

## PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

The Downtown Plan must contain workable methods for safeguarding landmark buildings. The basic questions which must be addressed by the plan are:

- o Which buildings (A, B, C or a combination thereof) should be designated for preservation? Resolution of this question poses several other questions which must be addressed. Which buildings should be protected because of their individual significance? Which buildings should be preserved because of their contextual importance? What scale of preservation is consistent with other downtown land use, and with economic, open space, and transportation objectives?
- o Should historic districts be established to protect the integrity of the landmark buildings? What should the boundaries of these districts be and are other requirements necessary for properties contiguous to the historic district? If so what height, bulk, siting, and building design requirements should be established for new development permitted within the historic districts?
- o Should buildings of landmark status be protected through absolute prohibitions on demolition, by economic incentives, or some combination of these? If prohibitions on demolition are enacted, how should Downtown regulations deal with the issue of compensation?

## HOUSING

### ISSUES

Continued growth in Downtown employment will have a major impact on citywide and Downtown housing. Citywide impacts under current C-3 regulations and Proposition O are likely to be equal for at least 15 to 20 years. If assumptions in recent EIRs prepared for Downtown office developments are correct, there will be 31,000 more Downtown employees living in San Francisco by 1985, and 30,000 more by 2000. (These figures assume that 40 percent of new employees would reside in





San Francisco.) This roughly translates into an increased demand for 17,200 housing units in the city by 1985 and another 16,700 by 2000.<sup>1</sup> The demand would have to be met by the displacement of existing residents not employed in Downtown, by the construction of new housing units in the city, and by a shift in employment of residents from outside to inside the Downtown.

The Downtown-generated demand for housing is 10.5 percent of the total housing stock in the city. Accommodating this demand would require a major increase in new housing construction and the displacement of substantial numbers of low- or moderate-income households. But the city's ability to achieve this additional housing is limited because of its historically low rate of construction. For the past ten years, San Francisco's average annual increase in housing has been only 1000 dwelling units. In addition, the supply of suitable and available units has been declining. The increase in units has been absorbed, despite a decline in the city's population, because of the decrease in household size, and there has been a substantial displacement of lower income households over the last decade. There is thus a declining supply of suitable and potentially available housing units.

Continued employment growth in Downtown is likely to result in continued displacement of lower income residents and a higher rate of new housing construction. The total number of units made available by these means, however, will not be sufficient to house the increased number of Downtown employees. Therefore, the percentage of employees living in San Francisco will continue to decline. The percentage will fail to reach even the 40 percent figure assumed in recent EIRs, and the number of commuters, particularly from the East Bay, will increase. However, even if Downtown growth were kept substantially lower than the estimate used in this study, the effect on housing would probably not be much different except that the percentage, but not the actual number, of employees living in San Francisco would be higher.

In contrast to the citywide situation, major differences in housing impacts are likely under the C-3 and Proposition O assumptions. The 31 percent increase in land consumption brought about by the lowering of allowable floor area would tend to channel new construction to properties occupied by low-cost apartments or hotels. Displacement associated with the two scenarios is shown below:

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<sup>1</sup> Assumes an average of 1.8 Downtown employed persons per household. This assumption could tend to underestimate demand since in many households some wage earners will be employed outside of Downtown San Francisco.



<u>Scenario</u>	<u>Apartments Displaced</u>	<u>Hotel Rooms Displaced</u>
Existing C-3		
Short-Term	172	757
Long-Term	98	1,672
Total	270	2,429
Initiative		
Short-Term	180	950
Long-Term	400	5,553
Total	580	6,503

Curtailment of the allowable floor area and height in the C-3-R and C-3-G zones, which currently serve as the hotel district for the Downtown, will also indirectly lead to further displacement of low-income residents in Downtown. Due to the short supply of visitor hotel space in the city, resident hotels are being converted to accommodate visitors. Under Proposition O this trend might increase as a result of the lowered FARs and heights in the C-3-G and C-3-R areas, which will make it more difficult to assemble sufficient land to construct hotels of a size economically attractive to hotel operators. This could have the effect of discouraging development of new hotel rooms in Downtown as well as of increasing conversions of hotels from resident to visitor use.

Whether or not Proposition O bonus features will improve the housing supply is highly speculative. The present language of Proposition O limits bonuses to residential development within 500 feet. This limitation will make finding suitable sites in the areas of the C-3 that are attractive to developers of nonresidential structures extremely difficult. In the absence of other bonuses, there might be sufficient economic incentives for some new housing construction if suitable sites can be found. However, if bonuses are available for other purposes, such as energy conservation or provision of pedestrian amenities, developers may choose to increase the floor area and increase their economic return by this means. Also left unaddressed by Proposition O is the mandate to provide low- and moderate-income housing. Further, there is no assurance that portions of a new housing supply created in Downtown would not be used for "second homes," units owned or leased by corporations or individuals who would use these units on a part-time basis or make the units available to business visitors.

#### PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

The review of housing-related issues points to a series of problems and questions that need to be addressed in the Downtown Plan:





- o What is the city's policy in regard to housing in Downtown? Should low- and moderate-income housing stock be protected? Should accommodations for low- and moderate-income households be supplemented?
- o What is the city's policy as regards providing in-city housing for persons employed in the city? Should opportunities for Downtown employees to live in the city be promoted?
- o What land use and regulatory changes should be made based on the city's housing objectives? Should portions of the Downtown be rezoned to give preference to housing or to help conserve the existing housing stock? (Should, for example, an area like the Tenderloin be placed in a new zoning district which only conditionally permits uses other than housing? In such an event, the district regulations could be drafted to require multiple use projects containing housing, or regulations could be amended to require or give incentives for rehousing of displaced low- and moderate-income residents.)
- o Should bonus regulations limit eligible housing projects to those within the immediate vicinity of the development site, or to the Downtown, or to any area in the city?
- o Should Downtown development be coupled with housing programs elsewhere in the city to help promote more affordable housing? Where might this new housing be provided? South of Market? The waterfront?
- o Should different allowances in FAR and height regulations be made as an incentive for housing and hotels? (Siting and design requirements are more demanding for housing and hotels than for commercial uses.)
- o If market rate housing is to be encouraged in Downtown, which areas are appropriate for this use? As the decision to encourage such housing is closely tied to transportation decisions, without parking will the housing attract sufficient residents to make this program worthwhile?

Clearly then, a major responsibility of the Downtown Plan will be to resolve the housing roles for Downtown and to determine the programs necessary to promote these roles. These decisions, however, cannot be made in isolation. They will require concurrent resolution of other Downtown land use, transportation, and design concerns.



## ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

### ISSUES AND PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

#### Noise

The noise environment of the San Francisco Downtown will be affected by future growth in three areas: traffic noise, construction noise, and building mechanical equipment noise.

Traffic volume projections for the C-3 and Proposition O growth scenarios estimate that under either scenario there would be a short-term (by the year 1985) increase of approximately 15-20 percent. This increase in traffic would cause a generally negligible increase in the overall level of environmental noise. By the year 2000, under either growth scenario, traffic volumes would increase approximately 50-60 percent. This increase would cause a 1-2 decibel (dBA) increase in the overall level of environmental noise. An increase in noise levels of only 1 dBA cannot be perceived by the human ear except in carefully controlled laboratory experiments. Outside the laboratory, a 3 dBA is considered a just noticeable difference. An increase of at least 5 dBA is required before any change in community response would be expected.

This generalization is subject to one qualification. The introduction of bus-only routes and new one-way traffic arteries could significantly increase noise levels along certain streets. Depending on the types of land uses present along these streets (residential, commercial, educational) and their noise sensitivity, these increases could have more or less adverse impacts. These relationships should be explored in the Downtown Plan.

Construction activities typically cause serious noise impacts for relatively short periods of time. Since construction noise impacts are site-specific, it is difficult to assess the impacts on generalized growth scenarios. However, to the extent that the Proposition O growth scenario will tend toward diffuse construction activity, it will in turn tend to spread construction noise over a larger geographic area, possibly affecting a greater number of people. In contrast, the C-3 growth scenario would tend to concentrate construction activity and its noise impacts, possibly affecting a smaller number of people, but more intensely.

The potential for building mechanical noise to have an impact on nearby land uses always exists. Again these impacts are site-specific and highly dependent on the care exercised by a building's designers and mechanical engineers in considering





noise control measures for such equipment as ventilation fans, cooling towers, and chillers.

### Microclimate

The microclimate of Downtown San Francisco is defined by precipitation, temperature, and wind velocity. Of these factors, temperature or sunlight and wind are affected by the height, bulk, and orientation of a building and, in the case of wind, its relationship to other buildings. Because of the overwhelming importance of these design factors in determining sun and wind impacts, the future impacts of the C-3 and Proposition O growth scenarios may only be discussed in general terms.

Under the C-3 growth scenario, continued high-rise development in the Downtown will reduce sunlight at ground level, and in certain instances will create areas of stronger winds. Public plazas and open spaces may be made less comfortable and, in some cases, unusable. Similar impacts will be experienced under the Proposition O growth scenario, but to the degree that this scenario results in smaller buildings which cast shorter shadows and intercept less wind, they will be of a lesser magnitude. Growth under the C-3 scenario will tend to concentrate its microclimate impacts in an area already severely affected, while growth under Proposition O will tend to disperse these impacts into areas not now so affected.

### Air Quality

The air quality impacts of continued growth in the San Francisco Downtown have both regional and local implications. Regional air quality impacts are related to regional changes in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) calculated according to trip generation rates, trip origin, and modal split. Since these factors are similar for Downtown growth under both the C-3 and Proposition O scenarios, the regional air quality impacts of these alternative growth scenarios do not differ significantly. It is impossible to assess net regional change in air quality caused by increased Downtown growth under either scenario in the absence of two factors:

- o Some assumptions would need to be made concerning where growth would have occurred if it had not located in the San Francisco Downtown.
- o Data would need to be developed concerning the relationship between the higher transit usage of downtown employees versus the longer trips for those downtown employees who commute by auto.



Development of these factors is beyond the scope of the present study, but they should be considered in the Downtown Plan.

Local air quality impacts are related to local traffic volumes and congestion levels. While it is theoretically possible to predict carbon monoxide levels at street level based on traffic data, it is impossible to predict in Downtown San Francisco because of the lack of ambient air quality data, the lack of a suitable validated carbon monoxide model for the street canyons of Downtown, and the absence of meteorological data. It is known, however, that carbon monoxide concentrations are directly proportional to vehicle emissions, and relative emissions may be predicted using traffic data.

The Bay Area Air Quality Plan contains information on the effect of vehicle speed on carbon monoxide emissions, and provides data on future year volumes, vehicle speeds, and emission rates. Conclusions can thus be reached concerning the increase or decrease in future vehicle emissions, which can then be used to predict the increase or decrease in carbon monoxide levels.

By 1985 traffic volumes would increase on the order of 20 percent over current volumes under both the C-3 and Proposition O growth scenarios. Because most streets are at or near capacity at the peak hour, the result would be an extension of the peak traffic. While peak hour traffic volumes cannot increase much, traffic during the peak 8-hour traffic period (critical from an air quality standpoint because the 8-hour carbon monoxide standard is exceeded in San Francisco), would increase by about 20 percent. Average traffic speeds would also decrease due to congestion and increased pedestrian interference. If average speeds in the peak 8-hour period were to drop from 13 mph to 8 mph, total emissions from streets would increase by 11 percent between 1979 and 1985, despite the fact that the average emission rate for vehicles would have dropped by 43 percent during the period due to increasingly effective emission controls.

A similar calculation for the year 2000, using a projected traffic increase of 50 percent in the peak 8-hour period and reduction of average speeds to 5 mph, results in an increase of 48 percent between 1979 and 2000 despite a 62 percent decrease in the per-mile emission rate for autos.

Therefore, carbon monoxide levels are likely to increase in the Downtown between the present and 2000. This increase would be similar under both the C-3 and Proposition O growth scenarios, although under the latter traffic would be more dispersed and concentrations on the busiest streets would be lower. While these increases in carbon monoxide will adversely affect air quality, the absolute levels of air quality degradation cannot be determined until the monitoring of air quality of Downtown streets has been accomplished. This Downtown air quality monitoring





effort, combined with the collection of meteorological data and coordinated with surveys of traffic volumes and operating speeds, should be undertaken during the preparation of the Downtown Conservation and Development Plan.

## ENERGY

### ISSUES AND PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

Growth projected for Downtown San Francisco under the C-3 and Proposition O scenarios will generate energy demands in the following areas:

- o construction/demolition activities
- o fabrication of building materials
- o building operations, such as heating, ventilation, air conditioning, lighting, equipment operation, waste disposal, and water supply
- o transportation.

The energy demands of each scenario will be approximately equal, primarily because each scenario would generate the same level of development with similar trip generation rates and modal splits. Slight differences may exist between the two scenarios in the area of building operations.

The Proposition O scenario will tend to result in a more widespread pattern of development with lower structures than would tend to be developed under the C-3 scenario. This lower rise, dispersed-development pattern may tend to reduce energy consumption in the following ways:

- o Lower rise buildings would tend to avoid the creation of shade valleys characteristic of streets lined with high-rise structures. Shade valleys compromise the opportunity to integrate daylight into artificial interior lighting systems, which are significant, direct consumers of electricity, and which indirectly increase electrical consumption by adding to the heat loads of air conditioning systems.
- o Lower rise buildings have higher ratios of roof area to floor area, thereby enhancing the ability of solar collector arrays to significantly contribute to meeting occupant space and hot water heating loads.



- o Lower rise buildings require less energy for vertical circulation and mechanical systems vertical distribution.

Given the variety and complexity of energy trade-offs in building design, there is no guarantee that lower rise buildings are more energy efficient than taller buildings. There are many more direct and immediate measures for achieving energy efficiency than through regulation of building height. These measures should be explored as part of the Downtown Conservation and Development Plan.

## WATER AND WASTEWATER

### ISSUES AND PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

Most of the Downtown water needs are served by the University Mound Reservoir. A small portion of the Downtown water needs are served by the College Hill Reservoir. The system currently has an excellent four-day reserve capacity. By the year 2000, under both the C-3 and Proposition O scenarios, Downtown building space is expected to increase by approximately 65 percent. It is likely that water demand will increase in direct proportion to this increase. The increased demand for water space can be handled by the existing supply system. The five transmission mains coming into the city from the peninsula, the two reservoirs, and the main feeder lines to Downtown have the capacity to handle the increased load. A few minor replacements of distribution lines would be necessary, but because of the age of these lines, their replacement would be necessary under normal maintenance.

San Francisco's sewer wastewater and storm water runoff drain into the same collection system. Currently, this causes high peak flows to the treatment plants during the rainy season and subsequent overflows of raw sewage into San Francisco Bay and into the ocean. In order to correct this situation, the city is implementing the San Francisco Wastewater Management Plan.

The system under the wastewater plan is designed to handle peak wet weather flows; the majority of this flow is stormwater runoff. Neither scenario would change the amount of runoff or its flow patterns. In both scenarios the increase in building space corresponds to a 65 percent increase in sewage flow by the year 2000. However, this increase in sewage flow in the Downtown would cause only a 2 to 3 percent increase in peak wet weather flow because sewage is only a small portion of that flow.





The sewage collection lines in Downtown can now handle peak wet weather flow without overflow. The collector lines in Downtown can handle the 2 to 3 percent increase in wet weather flow and could easily handle dry weather flows.

Although there would be some difference in flow distribution under the two scenarios, total flow would be approximately the same. The collection system and treatment plants planned under the wastewater management program could accommodate all foreseeable sewage requirements. Consequently, there are no major Downtown planning implications pertaining to the provisions of water or sewer service.

## FISCAL CONCERNS

### ISSUES

Because development capacity will accommodate demand under both scenarios, fiscal impacts should be similar. More land would be required to develop an equivalent floor area under Proposition O than under C-3. The greater amount of redeveloped land would mean that more property would be removed from the protection from reassessment provided under the Jarvis-Gann amendment. Hence, assessed values for the redeveloped properties should increase. However, because more land would be redeveloped, particularly outside the existing financial district core, less older development would remain. In addition, the greater limitation of developable floor area under Proposition O would mean faster increases in property prices and therefore higher assessments. It is not clear whether the net result of these opposite effects would be more or less total assessed value (and therefore property tax revenues).

Beyond the long-term 20 year horizon, Proposition O will constrain development and eventually permit only about half the floor area that could be accommodated under existing controls. While the lower level of development would require fewer support services and infrastructure, it would also generate fewer tax revenues, particularly gross receipts, and payroll and property tax revenues. However, the Jarvis-Gann amendment has already decreased the significance of property tax revenues. Whether development expected under the initiative or the status quo would be financially self-sustaining must await further analysis. However, it is clear that the Downtown area will be a focus of significant fiscal problems for San Francisco. Before passage of the Jarvis-Gann amendment, it appeared that revenues generated in the Downtown exceeded costs incurred in the region by a narrow margin of not more than 5 percent.



The following table presents the estimates of costs and revenues attributable to the San Francisco Downtown derived primarily from the 1975 SPUR study, Impact of Intensive High-Rise Development in San Francisco.

The cost and revenue categories shown in the table correspond to the categories identified in the report on pages 185 and 245, with one exception--school costs and revenues. School costs and revenues were omitted because it is not clear how to apportion school costs to the Downtown. However, if we were to accept the allocation method adopted in the SPUR report, costs attributable to the Downtown would be higher than shown by \$49.4 million (page 239), and revenues would be higher by \$10 million (page 245). Including school costs and revenues and using the SPUR allocation, the relationship shown in the table would be reversed, and costs for the Downtown would exceed revenues in fiscal 1973 by more than \$37 million or more than 60 percent.

TABLE 8  
ESTIMATION OF MUNICIPAL COSTS AND REVENUES ATTRIBUTABLE  
TO THE SAN FRANCISCO DOWNTOWN AREA — FISCAL 1973

<u>Cost Categories</u>	<u>\$ Million</u>	<u>Revenue Categories</u>	<u>\$ Million</u>
Police	12.7	Payroll Tax	15.0
Fire	8.8	Hotel Room Tax	5.4
Sewage	2.2	Retail Purchase & Use Tax	3.9
Muni Deficit	7.0	Property Tax	15.0
General Government	4.9	Vehicular Revenues	8.6
Vehicular Costs	<u>10.3</u>		<u>      </u>
Total	45.9	Total	47.9

The effect of the Jarvis-Gann amendment is to reverse the relationship to the point where present costs may exceed revenues in the Downtown by as much as 25 percent. According to the 1975 SPUR report, property tax revenues once comprised about 50 percent (including school revenues) of total revenues generated in the Downtown (40 percent without school revenues). According to the Harvey M. Rose Accounting Corporation, the average property tax bill for office buildings in San Francisco was expected to drop by 70 percent as a result of Proposition 13. Consequently, applying that drop to the 1973 base used in the SPUR report, property tax revenues in the Downtown decreased by more than \$10 million (not including revenues to schools), meaning that Downtown costs exceeded revenues affected by Proposition 13 by about \$7 million or nearly 25 percent.





Although the 1975 SPUR report estimates that additional municipal costs related to new development will be less than the new revenues derived from that development, that estimate does not include the costs of major transportation infrastructure. Moreover, the Jarvis-Gann amendment's limitation of the annual increase in property taxes will make the marginal surplus from new buildings only temporary, eventually leading to an even greater deficit. Of course, new buildings should be appraised at their full value. According to the analysis in the SPUR report, one might expect the initial revenues they generate to exceed their cost impact on the city. However, the SPUR estimates did not recognize a possible need for major inter-city transportation facilities beyond new buses. For example, the report assumed that BART would carry 90 percent of the transbay demand. Although the cost burden of such new developments may not be levied directly through city taxes, they would be incurred at least partially by city taxpayers.

In addition, the Jarvis-Gann amendment limits the property tax annual increase to 2 percent, unless of course the property is sold, whereupon it can be reappraised at its full market value. Although residential property turns over on an average of every seven years, commercial property is only infrequently sold (according to the San Francisco Assessor's Office). Additionally, the transfer of commercial property is even less likely with the tax deterrent of the amendment. Therefore, while one might expect municipal costs to increase at a rate approximating that of inflation, property tax (15 to 20 percent of Downtown revenues) will increase by only 2 percent annually. Unless additional taxes can be raised to replace the lost property taxes, even the net surplus that might be contributed by new development will eventually be eroded and an even greater deficit will result.

Hence, new Downtown development will not solve the city's growing fiscal problem; without new revenue sources, development will make it worse in the long run. If costs and revenues are to be brought back into balance, a new fiscal policy must be developed which accounts for all expected costs, allows for inflation, and can accommodate unanticipated costs. The policy should also recognize that the shift toward assessing homeowners a proportionately greater share of the tax burden will grow under the present structure. The city may wish to consider whether a new policy should reflect an equitable policy for allocating the fiscal burden among the city's taxpayers.

#### PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

A Downtown plan with new development should not be a severe burden to any segment of the city and should be achievable within foreseeable financial limits. Thus the plan should address in its analytical sections the following questions:



- o To what extent does the Downtown generate sufficient revenues to cover the cost of public services? (Both total and marginal costs and revenues should be examined.)
- o How does Downtown development affect the efficiency and equity of the city's financial structure? (Alternative intensities and locations of development should be considered.)
- o How might a more efficient and equitable financial structure be achieved?

The magnitude of the city's fiscal challenge should soon become clearer. The likely passage of the Gann "spirit of 13" initiative may reduce governmental costs further, but may also have other public service impacts on Downtown. These will have to be assessed.

The influence of net deficits will have to be weighed along with all other criteria in selecting an appropriate plan option. Yet the requirement for a sound implementation program will, in any event, necessitate intensive study of mechanisms to fund public development, operating expenses, and planning expenses.

## INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL DISLOCATION

### ISSUES

Continued development within the Downtown regardless of the outcome of Proposition O, will have the effect of dislocating industrial and commercial uses within the C-3 zone. As the more desirable locations are developed, land elsewhere will increase in value because of continued demand for floor space and a growing relative scarcity of developable land.

Over time, the restricted land supply and increased demand for building space will make it more difficult for firms to move into or within the Downtown. Those firms or services which cannot increase prices enough to offset increases in rent will either have to accept decreasing profit margins or relocate (partially or entirely) in the Downtown, in the city, or possibly out of the city altogether. The firms and services most sensitive to increases in their building space costs will be the first to move.





The spread of development under either scenario also means that greater development pressure and increasing building space costs will evolve adjacent to the C-3 zone, particularly to the C-2 zones. This will result in a displacement of firms and services unable to bear the higher building space costs in the absence of effective controls.

The rate of land consumption will be higher under Proposition O amendments for reasons stated earlier in this report. Furthermore, because Proposition O will, in the long-term, constrain development potential, it will become increasingly difficult for firms to expand their existing quarters to adjacent space or assemble alternative larger spaces elsewhere in the most attractive Downtown areas. Consequently, large aggregates of space will command a premium in anticipation of the supply limitation. In fact, all space with a desirable location or size or other amenities will appreciate in value with the anticipation of its growing scarcity.

Dislocation will occur throughout the Downtown; however, the greatest potential for industrial and commercial dislocation will occur south of Market, because of the greater concentration of these uses in this area. Since office space is more likely to replace industrial and commercial space, there is a corresponding loss of these historical uses. Industrial and commercial displacement associated with the two scenarios is shown below:

<u>Scenario</u>	<u>Industrial and Commercial Space Dislocated</u>
Current C-3 Total	530,000 gross square feet
Proposition O Total	700,000 gross square feet

Available data sources may not have accounted for recent conversions to uses other than industrial and commercial. Nevertheless, the levels of displacement are estimated to correspond to 660 employees displaced under the current C-3 zoning regulations and 875 employees displaced under Proposition O amendments. The difference in magnitude between these two scenarios is relatively insignificant, yet it is important under either set of assumptions to recognize the potential loss to the Downtown of industrial and commercial uses that serve the area and whose functions rely on proximity to the Downtown as their market for services.



## PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

Under either scenario, as desirable land becomes more scarce, areas within the Downtown that are less central will increase in demand. The basic questions which must be addressed by the plan are:

- o What effects do policies which may be implemented to protect the building areas within the C-3 zone have on increasing the demand for space elsewhere?
- o Would reclassification of uses permitted in the C-3-G create pressure for space elsewhere, especially in the south of Market C-3-O and C-3-S?
- o Would policies to protect Downtown housing supply increase demand for space elsewhere, thereby contributing to the potential for industrial and commercial dislocation?
- o What is the overall function of industrial and commercial uses within the C-3 zone and especially south of Market? Should these uses be preserved in their current locations or are there other locations where they can be accommodated without creating undesirable side effects?
- o Must these uses be located close in the Downtown? What priority should be given to their continued existence?









# 4 PLANNING PROCESS AND PROGRAM

Whatever the outcome of Proposition O, the planning program launched in Phase I should continue without delay. The current momentum and organization should be fully exploited. Also, many of the interim controls will expire in two years. When those controls expire, new and permanent regulations must be in place. These should not perpetuate the gross form of control embodied in the C-3 regulations. At best, breaking up Downtown into large districts and attempting to treat all parts within each district similarly reduces the quality and appropriateness of development to the lowest common denominator. At worst, it breeds (and has bred) disenchantment with the institutions that support such arbitrary distinctions. Large-scale zoning may be appropriate for a suburban residential area, but it hardly responds to the needs of Downtown San Francisco.

Although we do not yet know what regulations will finally be suitable, it is clear that we must have a detailed planning policy which will be highly sensitive to local conditions. Thus, the Downtown Plan will conceive three-dimensional designs with varying bulks, dimensions, heights, and open spaces, and with specific visual or architectural treatment and historic preservation proposals. An administrative review procedure based on the Downtown Plan, or specific plans closely tied to the Downtown Plan, may be needed and must be based on detailed policy.

The plan should be precise, flexible, effective, and provide latitude for good architectural design. The plan should propose both short-term and long-term policies. The plan will not remain intact indefinitely, but will be modified as growth and technology trigger the need for modifications. The plan should adhere to larger city-wide policies, but should propose needed changes in them.

The plan should reflect implementation resources, and should be readily achievable by regulation, capital improvements, funding mechanisms, and possibly a development corporation or other development entity. The plan should also be conceived to eliminate, to the extent legally possible, the need for environmental impact reports in Downtown. We expect that impacts will be taken into account in advance of development, rather than after a project is conceived. Impacts, evaluation of alternatives, and "mitigations" will be fully considered in formulating both the plan and the Master Downtown Plan EIR in order to provide more predictability for developers and landowners and more efficient expenditure of limited public funds.





The planning process and technical methodology used will determine the validity of the plan. The process, in its basic form, includes: refinement of issues and work program; formulation of tentative goals and objectives; collection of supplementary data; planning analyses; identification of feasible physical form, use distribution, and circulation elements; compositing of plan options; presentation of options in sketch form with impact and implementation facets; evaluation based on goal-related criteria; selection of a preferred option; refinement of a preliminary plan; detailing of an implementation program; and publication of a final plan. A concluding administrative phase will include public review procedures and enactment processes. The Master Downtown Plan EIR would be completed as an integral part of the overall program.

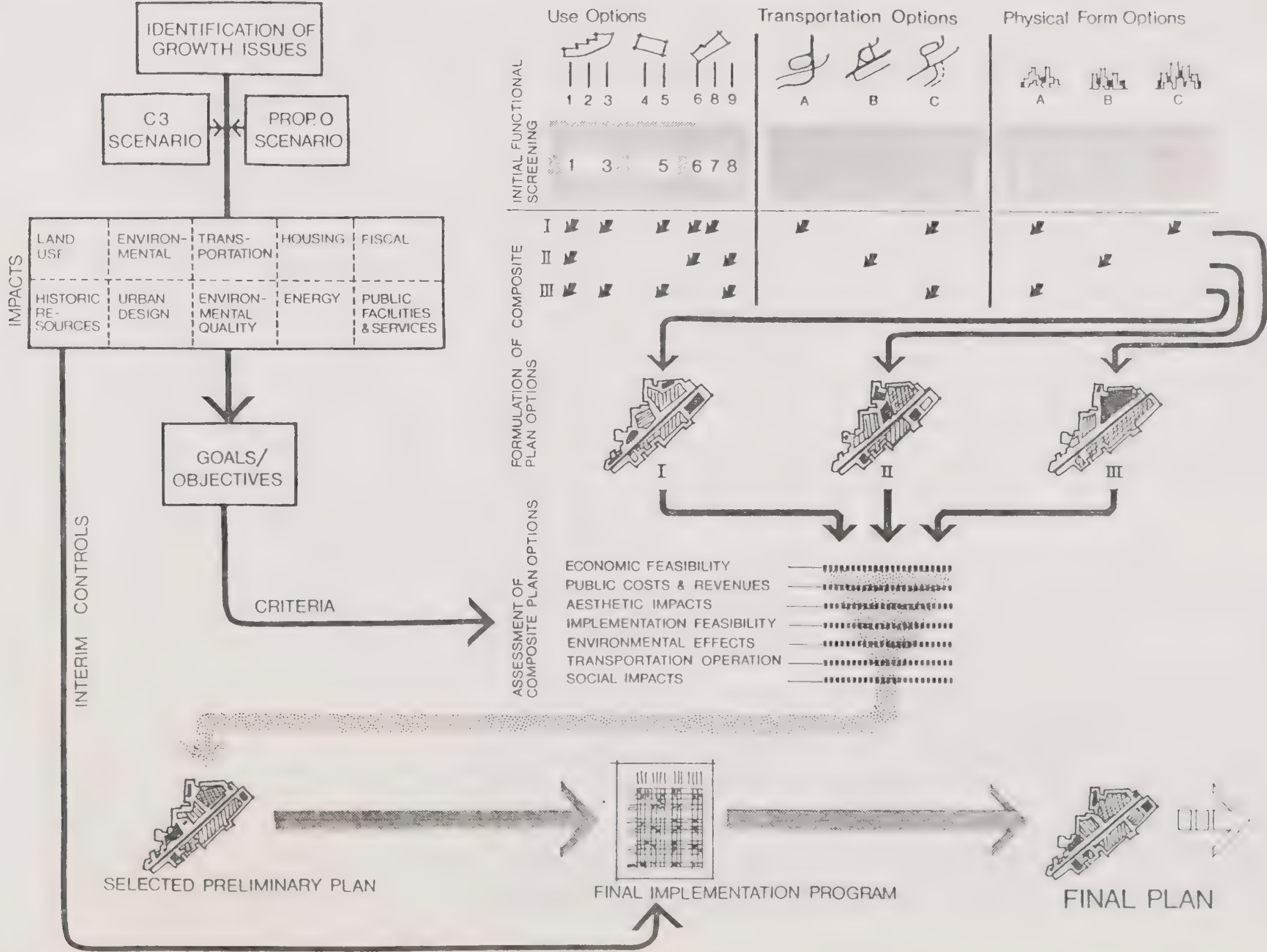
Work on updating the commerce and industry element of the Master Plan should also continue, with the proper relationship of Downtown to other commercial centers in the city having been clearly established. The larger regional context of Downtown should also be considered.

The Downtown Plan would have six major components:

- o overall goals, objectives, and policies
- o a land use element designating the amount, type, and location of permitted office, retail, government, wholesale, and other uses, and any special conditions necessary to ensure compatibility among uses and to protect and promote the proper functional relationship of dependent land uses
- o a circulation element, designating the Downtown-wide system of auto routes, transit accommodations, parking and pedestrian streets and ways. (This element should specify the required relationship of these circulation components, establish the relationship to related city and regional circulation facilities and the prerequisite modifications and additions to these facilities, and set forth the functional requirements for each component.)
- o a design element establishing the design requirements governing the overall physical form and appearance of Downtown and the specific buildings, roadway, and open space design requirements necessary to bring about a visually coherent, functionally acceptable, and environmentally sound Downtown. (The element should include both design requirements to protect the Downtown historic and architectural heritage and requirements to ensure that new development is designed in such a way that the incremental additions promote the Downtown policies and objectives.)



Figure 19 PROPOSED DOWNTOWN PLANNING PROCESS







- o a growth management implementation program, setting forth the procedures for regulating the rate of growth; establishing the regulatory provisions governing building design; specifying the procedures for the review of both private and public construction; designating capital improvement requirements and priorities; providing housing programs; establishing special districts; and providing for financing methods
- o a Master Downtown Plan Environmental Impact Report (This will include all basic environmental data and impacts, and will meet legal requirements for a defensible EIR. )

Specific work tasks in Phase 2 would be characterized by a screening of options and continued narrowing of choices. The documenting of the most critical issues facing Downtown, begun in Phase 1, would be continued at the outset. Other early Phase 2 work should include a review of related policies of city and regional agencies, modification of the work program based on needs identified subsequent to the Phase 1 report, delineation of an appropriate overall planning area boundary, and identification of planning subareas. Concurrently, preliminary goals and policies should be formulated. This will provide a link to the documented issues and provide direction for any needed survey and analysis efforts. The goals and objectives of the plan represent the city's commitment to its Downtown community, focusing on real issues and eliciting widespread comment. At the same time, these goals and objectives should be considered preliminary, subject to reconsideration after later study. They should reflect a "concept" of Downtown and its role in the city and region.

The overlapping tasks of data collection and analysis must be thorough for they are the foundation of an intellectually honest and fully defensible planning program. Although the final plan is likely to be approved in a political context, the facts will "speak for themselves," and thus will have continuing usefulness. Data collection should supplement existing information, not duplicate it.

Land use studies to document land characteristics and existing facilities are crucial. Studies on residential use, circulation and transportation, design resources, and visual form and organization will also be done as required. The traffic and movement analyses will be accomplished in large measure by the center city circulation program. However, the latter must be incorporated into Phase 2 work and used to test and refine the proposals dealing with land use, physical form, and circulation. In short, a thorough anatomy of Downtown will be completed. It should be compiled, coded, and made retrievable both for later plan modification and for any impact assessment need. Thorough fiscal and economic analyses will require research into revenue/cost, revenue generation, capital cost, supply/demand, and



housing and demographics. Finally, an analysis of implementation resources will identify potential means for carrying out the plan.

The early goals and objectives of the plan will be refined after the analytical findings are made. The goals/objectives will be supplemented by their policy implications and by composite preliminary sketch plans, to provide a fully dimensioned array of physical form, use distribution, and circulation options. Citizen workshops may help to disseminate, digest, and modify. Although consensus may not be possible, thoughtful response will be sought.

The process of option selection is the hardest part of the program. It involves testing of plan options to ascertain which one most closely conforms to, or promotes the goals and objectives. This process may be partly intuitive, partly based on common sense, and partly based on a recognition of what is possible. However, a starting point should be the systematic application of comprehensive evaluation criteria, including those relating to air quality, energy consumption, traffic, and housing. Implementation feasibility will be a continuing concern.

Once a "selected" plan begins to surface, a preliminary plan can be formulated. This may include a set of subarea plans dealing with the especially sensitive precincts of Downtown (such as the Union Square environs, Market Street and the financial district). To assist in the Master Plan revision process, various elements of the Downtown Plan, such as those on land use, transportation, and urban design, will be culled from the plan, and appropriate proposals for Master Plan revision will be suggested. The final set of controls and implementing programs and the Master Downtown Plan EIR will then be devised.

After the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors have reviewed the preliminary and final plan, Phase 3, plan adoption, will begin. This phase will cover enactment of the land use controls, including specific ordinance modification by subarea, and adoption of a capital improvements program dealing with improvements to streets, transit, and open spaces. The regulations will be related to the current zoning ordinance and Master Plan, and will replace the interim controls.

A final plan report can be prepared in a form suitable for widespread public distribution and for official and staff use. Other products could include a summary report and a detailed appendix for technical use.

The existing citizen panel and technical committee should be continued and their role and size increased. Consultants will be useful in making the necessary commitment to complete the project on time. Phase 3 will be accomplished largely by city staff, with some consulting assistance. The entire work program is slated to have a duration of 18 months, including Phase I, which has now taken two months.





TABLE 9

## WORK PROGRAM

Duration(Months)

## PHASE 1 - RECONNAISSANCE AND PROGRAMMING

1 - 3

Document Existing/Projected Conditions  
 Formulate Alternative Scenarios  
 Identify Growth Impacts, Issues, and Implications  
 Develop Planning Process and Formulate Work Program  
 Prepare Interim Controls  
 Prepare Phase I Study Report

## PHASE 2 - PREPARATION OF DOWNTOWN PLAN

4 - 18

## Task 1 - Issues/Goals/Objectives/Framework

4 - 7

Refine Issues Statement  
 Refine Work Program  
 Review of Related Policies  
 Formulate Tentative Goals/Objectives  
 Identify Planning Area and Subarea Boundaries  
 Public Review of Goals/Objectives  
 Derivation of Evaluative Criteria

## Task 2 - Data Inventory and Analyses

6 - 10

Supplementary Surveys, as necessary:

Land Use  
 Economic/Fiscal  
 Activity/Employment  
 Housing  
 Circulation/Transportation  
 Design/Visual Form and Resources  
 Environmental Quality Factors  
 Development Capacity  
 Activity Analysis and Projections  
 Impact Analyses  
 Implementation Resources/Institutions



	Duration(Months)
Task 3 - Preliminary Plan Preparation	11 - 18
Functional Element Screening	
Compile Composite Options/Sketch Plan/Policies	
Apply Evaluative Criteria	
Promulgate for Public/Official Response	
Select Preferred Option	
Formulate Detailed Implementation Program	
Refine Preliminary Plan	
Formulate Master Downtown Plan EIR	
PHASE 3 - ADOPTION OF PLAN/ENACTMENT OF PROGRAMS	19 - 24
Task 1 - Adopt Final Downtown Plan	
Public Hearings	
Modify Plan as Required	
Publish Final Plan	
Prepare Summary (Optional)	
Task 2 - Enact Necessary Programs/Ordinances	
Public Hearings	
Prepare Legal Documents	
Enact Programs/Ordinances	
Certify Master Downtown Plan EIR	









# 5 INTERIM CONTROLS

This section is divided into four parts. The first states the purpose of the interim controls and their inherent limitations; the second discusses the impact of the passage of Proposition O on the interim controls; and the third describes options for putting them into effect. The first three sections introduce the fourth, which presents the interim controls proposed for the C-3 Downtown Commercial Districts while the San Francisco Downtown Conservation and Development Plan is being prepared.

## PURPOSE OF THE INTERIM CONTROLS

During the approximately twenty-one months required to complete the Downtown Plan, events clearly could occur that will either foreclose plan policy options or alter the conditions under which the plan is being formulated. Depending on the nature of these events and their impacts, the opportunity and effort represented by the plan could be seriously compromised. For example, the construction of a major office building at one of several locations along the southern edge of Market Street would result in the loss of sunlight to existing plazas and open spaces. These plazas and open spaces may be identified in the plan as requiring protection. Less dramatic but no less important in terms of impact, the further displacement of blue-collar employment opportunities from the area south of Market Street and to the west of Yerba Buena Center would preempt the resolution of the issue of how this area should relate functionally to the Downtown.

In short, if the Downtown planning effort is to be undertaken with maximum opportunities for exploration of the issues and alternatives, it must be supported by a set of regulatory and administrative controls designed to preserve planning options and to prevent conditions from substantially changing during the period in which the plan is being prepared.

Given their narrow purpose, interim controls are limited in scope and application. One limitation is that the interim controls cannot function as a permanent replacement either for existing regulations applicable to the C-3 Downtown





Commercial Districts or for regulations proposed for these districts by Proposition O. The controls are short term and by their nature must be superseded by a comprehensive, long-range set of regulations.

A second limitation is that although interim controls relate to Downtown conservation and development issues, they are not a plan-based response to those issues. Since they are not plan-based, the interim controls do not reflect the broad-based public policy decisions that will be one of the key products of the plan. Instead, the controls reflect judgements as to what temporary mechanisms are necessary to ensure that public policies will have the greatest possible opportunity for expression in the plan.

A third limitation is that because the interim controls are short term and not plan based, they are not a "near model" or close approximation of the regulatory system that will be developed and proposed for adoption to implement the plan. Obviously the substance of this proposed regulatory system will emerge only after the plan process is underway.

It must be emphasized that implicit in the enactment of interim controls is the commitment to go forward with Phases 2 and 3 of the plan and to develop a regulatory system that will ultimately supersede the controls. Lacking this commitment, adoption of interim controls has no purpose and is of questionable legality.

#### IMPACT OF PASSAGE OF PROPOSITION O ON INTERIM CONTROLS

Section 3719 of the California Elections Code provides in part that any ordinance proposed by initiative and adopted by the voters shall not be repealed or amended except by a vote of the people, unless otherwise provided in said ordinance. Therefore, if Proposition O is adopted by the voters, it would place substantive limitations on the interim controls with respect to basic and bonus floor area ratio (FAR) and height regulations. As provided by Proposition O, the interim controls may only lower any basic FAR or height limit the proposition establishes. Proposition O further limits the interim controls to granting bonus FARs only in exchange for significant public benefits that would derive from encouragement of public transit usage, energy conservation beyond the standard mandated by law, improvement of the pedestrian environment, and development of new housing in San Francisco.



## OPTIONS FOR EFFECTING INTERIM CONTROLS

Four major options are available for effecting the proposed interim controls. Each option varies with respect to authority, duration, notice and hearing requirements, environmental review requirements, appellate body, and efficacy. These characteristics are summarized in Table 10. The following discussion examines the authority and efficacy of the four options and is followed by a consideration of which options will best effect the elements of the interim controls.

### OPTION 1

The Planning Commission can effect interim controls by resolution of intention to reclassify property.

Under Section 302 of the San Francisco City Planning Code, the Planning Commission may by resolution of intention initiate an amendment to any part of the code, including the C-3 Downtown Commercial District regulations. The code distinguishes two types of amendments: changes in the text of the code and reclassifications of property, parenthetically defined as changes in the zoning map. (A third type of code amendment, establishment, abolition, or modification of a set-back line, does not concern us here.) As provided in Section 302(e), a resolution of intention to reclassify property applies to all building and land use permit applications filed subsequent to the day the resolution is adopted by the Commission and while proceedings on the proposed reclassification are pending. In contrast, a resolution of intention for a change in the text of the code applies to building permits only subsequent to its adoption by the Board of Supervisors.

Pursuant to Section 302(e), the Planning Commission could put into effect elements of the interim controls that are changes in the zoning map. Such elements would include modifications of the designations, locations, and boundaries of the height and bulk and use districts as shown in the zoning map provided for in Section 105 of the City Planning Code (see also Sections 202 and 252). However, the proposed interim controls go far beyond zoning map changes. Because the ability of this option to effect the full range of the interim controls is so severely limited, it will be dropped from consideration.

### OPTION 2

The Planning Commission can effect interim controls pursuant to discretionary review.





TABLE 10: OPTIONS FOR EFFECTING INTERIM CONTROLS

Option	Authority	Duration	Notice & Hearing	Environmental Review	Appellate Body	Efficacy
Planning Commission effects interim controls by resolution of intention to reclassify property.	City Planning Code Section 302(e)	Up to 2½ years	Same as for any resolution	Required	Board of Permit Appeals	Could be used only for zoning map changes.
Planning Commission effects interim controls under discretionary review power.	City Charter Section 7.500; Municipal Code Section 26	As specified in resolution	Same as for any resolution	Required	Board of Permit Appeals	Could not be used to impose flat prohibitions.
Board of Supervisors enacts interim controls as planning code amendment.	City Planning Code Section 302	As specified in amendment	Requires noticed public hearing by Planning Commission	Required	None, but may seek variance	Public hearing process may delay enactment of controls.
Board of Supervisors enacts interim controls as emergency measure.	California Government Code Section 65858	Up to 2 years	Not required initially	Probably required	None, but may seek variance	No major constraints.



Under Section 7.500 of the City Charter and Section 26 of the Municipal Code (License Code), the Planning Commission may exercise a power of discretionary review over building permit applications. The scope of this discretion is such that the commission may go beyond determining whether a proposed building conforms to the applicable use and other zoning regulations to considering the effect of a proposed building on surrounding property and its residents (City Attorney Opinion Nos. 79-29, April 30, 1979, and 845, of May 26, 1954). Further, the commission may by resolution establish a policy of subjecting all building permit applications within a specified area of the city to its discretionary review power. At present such policies have been established along Market Street from the central freeway overpass to San Francisco Bay and within the Portsmouth corridor area. The resolution establishing discretionary review in the Portsmouth corridor also contains general guidelines for the exercise of this review.

The Planning Commission could put the interim controls into effect by adopting a resolution establishing a policy of discretionary review throughout all four C-3 Downtown Commercial Districts. Detailed criteria and standards could be included in this resolution to explicate the substance of the controls.

The discretionary review power would easily encompass the range of proposed interim controls. However, since these controls would exist by virtue of a discretionary power, they probably would need to be cast in the form of standards and criteria which would be used by the commission in exercising its "sound discretion" in deciding whether a building permit or other land use entitlement should be granted or denied. Although further guidance on this issue from the City Attorney is necessary, it appears that discretionary review could not be used for outright or flat prohibitions which may, in some aspects of the proposed interim controls, contradict provisions of the existing C-3 zoning regulations.

### OPTION 3

The Board of Supervisors can enact interim controls in the form of Planning Code amendments.

Section 302 of the Planning Code empowers the Board of Supervisors to amend any part of the code. If this option were utilized, the interim controls would be enacted by ordinance of the Board of Supervisors in a manner similar to the adoption of the "Special Interim Controls for Certain Residential Districts" during the Residential Zoning Study.





Enactment of the interim controls by Board of Supervisors amendment of the Planning Code has two related constraints:

- o The formal public hearing process mandated by the code is likely to become a forum for discussions more appropriately reserved for the citizen participation program that would accompany development of the plan.
- o If such discussions and exchanges become prolonged and adoption of the interim controls is significantly delayed, ability to develop the plan may be increasingly narrowed by persons who take immediate action in the hope of avoiding the application of the interim controls.

#### OPTION 4

The Board of Supervisors can enact interim controls as an emergency measure.

California Government Code, Section 65858, provides that a legislative body may in an emergency adopt an interim ordinance prohibiting uses that may conflict with a zoning proposal the legislative body, Planning Commission, or Planning Department is studying or intends to study within a reasonable time. This section authorizes the Board of Supervisors to adopt the proposed interim controls by a four-fifths vote (nine votes).

#### SELECTION OF OPTIONS

Of all the options considered, Option 4 would have the greatest efficacy. It is direct immediate, and may include prohibitions not possible under discretionary review.

Option 2 differs fundamentally from Options 3 and 4 in its impact on the structure of the interim controls. Under Option 2, the controls would probably need to be cast in the form of standards and criteria, which would be used by the commission in exercising its "sound discretion" to decide whether a building or other land use entitlement should be granted or denied. Discretionary review does not easily lend itself to outright prohibitions, which may, in some aspects of the proposed interim controls, contradict existing provisions of the C-3 zoning regulations. Under Options 3 and 4, since the Board of Supervisors has authority to amend the zoning regulations, interim controls enacted by the board could include prohibitions or other provisions that would supersede existing zoning regulations.



In response to the fundamental difference between discretionary review and zoning ordinance amendments, the interim controls proposed in the next section rely on the former option when controls are best effected through case by case review and evaluation. When the controls are best effected by outright prohibition of proposed development, the latter option is used.

## PROPOSED INTERIM CONTROLS

This section presents the various parts of the proposed interim controls. Each part is organized around an issue identified during the Phase I study. Generally, the substantive content of each interim control is broken down into findings that support the imposition of the control. A statement of purpose for the control and its application, procedures, and standards are also presented.

It is important to note that some interim controls are intended to be effected both by an ordinance enacted by the Board of Supervisors and by a resolution of discretionary review adopted by the Planning Commission. When this dual approach is used, it is so indicated. The findings that may be used by both the board ordinance and the commission resolution are clearly noted. Also noted, where appropriate, is the impact of the passage of Proposition O on the various interim controls.

The presentation of the issue-oriented interim controls is preceded by a preamble that discusses general findings supporting the need for the interim controls. The preamble includes:

- o the findings of the Phase I study
- o the purpose, duration, and application of the interim controls
- o the relationship of the controls to other standards
- o the effect of the control on permit applications
- o an interim control map.

This preamble can be used either in a board ordinance or in a commission resolution effecting the various elements of the interim controls.





## PREAMBLE

### Findings

The regulatory system that currently applies to the C-3 Downtown Commercial Districts is not based on a comprehensive, integrated plan. Because it is not plan based, this regulatory system exhibits the following deficiencies:

- o The system lacks internal consistency and coherence required for it to adequately respond to the public policy issues now facing the Downtown.
- o The aspirations of the people of San Francisco for the future conservation and development of the Downtown are not in all cases reflected by the existing C-3 regulations.
- o Preliminary research and study of growth in the Downtown during the next 20 years demonstrates that the existing regulatory system is ill-equipped to address public policy issues that will be raised by this growth.

Since the adoption of the existing C-3 regulations in 1968, there have been significant advances in the fields of urban design, environmental impact analysis, and land use regulation, and many of these advances have potential application to the San Francisco Downtown. Further, the day-to-day operation of the C-3 regulatory system during the past 11 years has revealed many opportunities for refinement and improvement of this system. It is therefore appropriate now to undertake a comprehensive review of the C-3 regulations, but only if changes in these regulations are based on a comprehensive plan for the Downtown.

Given that the regulatory system applicable to the San Francisco Downtown does not have a basis in a plan for this area and given that the system is in need of updating and an overhaul if it is to be capable of implementing a plan for the Downtown, the public health, safety, and welfare therefore requires the preparation of a plan for the conservation and development of the San Francisco Downtown. The plan should encompass at least the areas now subject to the four C-3 Downtown Commercial Districts and such additional areas as may be subsequently judged appropriate for inclusion in the plan area. In addition, the plan should include an implementation element containing regulations and programs designed to carry out the policies of the plan.

If the existing C-3 regulatory system is allowed to govern during the preparation of the San Francisco Downtown Conservation and Development Plan, events are certain to occur that individually or cumulatively will have the effect of either



foreclosing plan policy options or altering the conditions on which the plan is being formulated. In order for the plan effort to be undertaken with maximum opportunities for exploration of the issues confronting the Downtown and alternative opportunities for resolving them, the existing C-3 regulations must be supplemented on an interim basis with a set of regulatory and administrative controls designed to preserve planning options and to prevent conditions from substantially changing while the plan is being prepared. It is therefore necessary to put into effect this set of interim controls for the purpose as set forth below.

### Purpose of the Interim Controls

The interim controls prescribed below are adopted to support the preparation of the San Francisco Downtown Conservation and Development Plan, which will include regulations designed to implement the plan and intended to replace controls. The interim controls are found and declared to be necessary to fulfill the purposes of the City Planning Code as stated in Section 101.

### Duration

These interim controls shall be applicable for a maximum of two years, after which they shall have no further force or effect.

### Application

Except where otherwise specifically indicated herein, the interim controls shall apply throughout the area encompassed by the C-3-R, -O, -S and -G Downtown Commercial Districts.

### Relationship to Other Standards

The provisions of the interim controls shall apply in addition to all other applicable provisions of the City Planning Code. In cases of inconsistency among provisions, the most restrictive provisions shall prevail unless the contrary is specifically stated in the provisions of the interim controls. Within the context of this paragraph, "most restrictive provision" means that provision which if applied would result in the lesser change in existing conditions and/or would afford the greatest opportunities for exploring alternatives and resolving issues addressed by the Downtown Conservation and Development Plan.

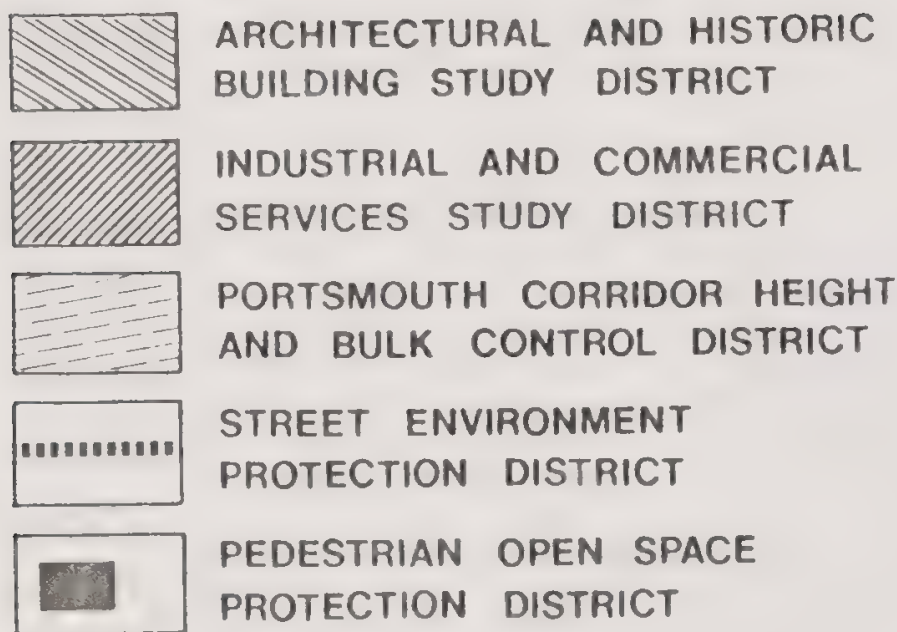








Figure 20  
INTERIM CONTROLS  
MAP A



Effect on Permits

The interim controls shall apply to all permits or other licenses and entitlements to use unless all of the following conditions are satisfied:

- o The permit was lawfully applied for on or before the effective date of the interim controls.
- o The permit was finally and lawfully granted by the City and County of San Francisco on or before the effective date of the interim controls.
- o The right to exercise the permit was fully vested on or before the effective date of the interim controls.
- o If the permit was the subject of judicial proceedings on the effective date of the interim controls, the permit was finally determined in subsequent judicial proceedings to have been lawfully granted.

Interim Controls Map

The districts established by certain of the interim controls shall be shown on the Interim Controls Map (see Figures 20 and 21), the original of which is on file with the Department of City Planning.

ISSUE 1: PROTECTION OF PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

The interim controls for this issue are intended for adoption by resolution of the Planning Commission.

Findings

The San Francisco Downtown is characterized by a pedestrian environment consisting of plazas, open spaces, and streets with a scale, variety of street-level building design, visual interest, and continuity of building facade that make them uniquely valuable.

The Downtown pedestrian environment is exceptionally vulnerable to the impacts of new development on microclimate (sunlight and wind velocity), pedestrian circulation, and human scale.





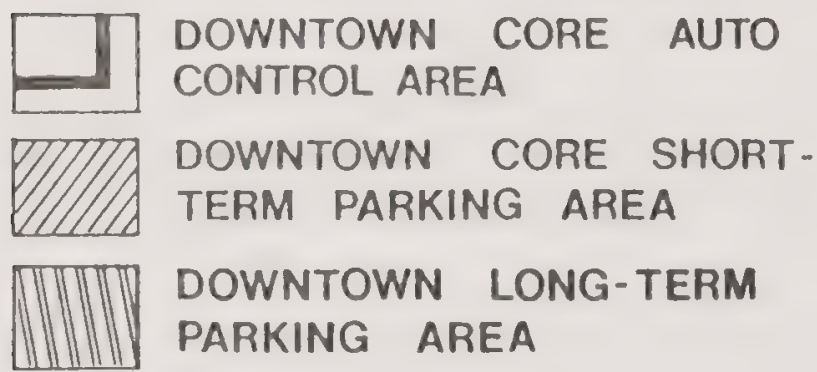








Figure 21  
INTERIM CONTROLS  
MAP B



The San Francisco Urban Design Plan contains fundamental principles and policies for major new development. It provides urban design guidelines on a city-wide, general scale. At present there is no body of formally adopted, detailed design guidelines expressly intended for the San Francisco Downtown.

To date the need identified in the above finding has been partially met by developing guidelines on a project-by-project basis. This system has functioned fairly efficiently, but staff of the Department of City Planning have indicated that often a project proponent incurs significant expenditures for preliminary design work that must then be substantially modified. Staff believe there is still a need for the promulgation of a detailed set of urban design guidelines, supplemental to the Urban Design Plan and applicable to the Downtown. Members of the development and architectural communities concur in the need for these guidelines.

#### Purpose

The purpose of these controls is to protect the pedestrian environment of Downtown San Francisco during the preparation of the Downtown Conservation and Development Plan so that the plan will have the maximum opportunity to explore and resolve the issues raised by the above findings. This purpose is to be achieved by designating the significant features of this environment and by preparing urban design guidelines. Experience gained in the application of these guidelines during the interim period should help in developing the urban design policies of the plan.

#### Applicability

The standards prescribed below shall apply to the C-3-O, -R, -S, and -G Downtown Commercial Districts and to the plazas, public open spaces, sidewalks, and streets designated on the Interim Controls Map as located either in a Street Environment Protection District or in a Pedestrian Open Space Protection District.

#### Standards

Development to which these standards apply shall be permitted only if the following conditions are satisfied:

##### Streetscape

- o Development shall be designed to maintain the human scale at street level by:





- using materials, details, and units of construction which relate to the size of man
- constructing buildings along the street frontage of heights sufficient to maintain the spatial enclosure of the street and to maintain a compatible relationship to existing building facades
- providing a distinctive base of the building that relates in height (approximately 30 to 40 feet) to the primary field of vision of a pedestrian in the adjoining street. (Building faces at the street line that exceed this height should incorporate horizontal breaks or details, such as a belt course at approximately the 30 to 40 foot height. Where similar design features are provided on nearby buildings, a coordinated design shall be provided.)
- providing building bulk and height, which in combination with existing or anticipated buildings, does not totally obscure street level views of the sky or other long distance features, such as hills or the bay
- incorporating uses at street level that lend pedestrian interest to the adjoining street or plazas and designing the first two or three floors of the building to permit pedestrians to glimpse the activity within.

#### Cityscape

- o Building heights and forms should contribute to a pleasing overall composition of the Downtown skyline as seen from major vantage points. Buildings should avoid exaggerated forms designed to compete with or dominate the Downtown skyline, and bulky buildings of similar heights, which detract from the sculptural form of Downtown, should be avoided. Building heights and bulk should instead reinforce the distinction between Downtown and the city's dominant hill areas by maintaining sufficient differences in the heights and forms of these areas and by contributing to the stepped, hill-like form of Downtown.
- o Building bulk and height should not contribute to the blocking of views from hill areas.
- o Building bulk and height should not obstruct views from major travel corridors which establish the relationship of Downtown to the hill areas and waterfront of the city.



- o Building surface materials should be light in color and therefore complementary to the prevailing appearance of the city.

#### Microclimate

- o Buildings shall not contribute to the blocking of sunlight in parks, plazas, and other open spaces of Downtown located within the Pedestrian Open Space Protection District. Retention of sunlight opportunities between the hours of 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. shall be ensured during the months of April through September.
- o No major reduction of direct sunlight and reflected light shall be permitted between the hours of 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. during the months of April through September for streets located in the Street Environment Protection District.
- o Building bulk, height, and position shall be designed to minimize and, where possible, lower wind velocity at street level in the immediate building environs. Increases in wind velocity and turbulence shall be mitigated by use of landscaping, street level building configurations, protected entrance areas, and other appropriate measures.

More detailed design guidelines prepared by the City Planning staff may be used as a basis for determining compliance with the above criteria.

## ISSUE 2: PRESERVATION OF ARCHITECTURALLY AND HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT BUILDINGS

The interim controls for this issue are designed to be effected by regulations relating to building types A, B, and C as defined in Splendid Survivors: San Francisco's Downtown Architectural Heritage (1979) or as contained in the list of Structures of Merit prepared by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board. It is intended that a prohibition on the demolition or alteration of type A and B buildings, or, alternatively, of Structures of Merit (upon adoption of this list by the Planning Commission), be enacted by the Board of Supervisors. The Planning Commission will exercise discretionary review over the demolition or alteration of type C buildings and the construction of new buildings within a defined portion of the Downtown.

The findings and purposes listed below may be used in both the board's ordinance and the commission's resolution.





## Findings

The San Francisco Downtown has a rich heritage of architecturally and historically significant buildings, which has been documented by the Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage in its 1979 publication Splendid Survivors: San Francisco's Downtown Architectural Heritage, and by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board in its proposed list of Structures of Merit.

Splendid Survivors contains a survey that rates all pre-World War II buildings in the San Francisco Downtown as follows:

	<u>Rating</u>	<u>Number of Buildings Rated</u>
A	Highest Importance: Individually the most important buildings in downtown San Francisco distinguished by outstanding qualities of architecture, historical values, and relationship to the environment. All A-group buildings are eligible for the National Register, and have of highest priority for City Landmark status.	102
B	Major Importance: Buildings of individual importance by virtue of architectural, historical, and environmental criteria. These buildings tend to stand out for their overall quality rather than for any particularly outstanding characteristics. B-group buildings are eligible for the National Register and have a secondary priority for City Landmark status.	170
C	Contextual Importance: Buildings distinguished by their scale, materials, compositional treatment, cornice, and other features. They provide the setting for more important buildings and add visual richness and character to the downtown area. Many C-group buildings may be eligible for the National Register as part of historic districts.	279
D	Minor or No Importance: Buildings that are insignificant examples of architecture by virtue of original design, or more frequently, insensitive remodeling. This category includes vacant buildings and parking lots. Most D-group buildings are "sites of opportunity".	124



The proposed list of Structures of Merit contains all type A and B buildings plus other structures of equal value located outside the scope of the heritage survey.

The San Francisco Downtown, with its many fine examples of late 19th and 20th century architecture, is among the most vital and attractive in the United States. The historic buildings unify the Downtown and make San Francisco the unique city that it is. This architectural cohesion has, however, gradually been disappearing since World War II as these buildings are one by one demolished or altered.

There is at present no comprehensive plan for the maintenance of the architectural and historic heritage of the San Francisco Downtown. Even if such a plan were to exist, the regulatory and administrative tools required to implement it are not available.

### Purpose

The purpose of these controls is to establish standards for architecturally and historically significant buildings in the four C-3 Downtown Commercial Districts in order to allow the Downtown Conservation and Development Plan maximum opportunity to resolve the issues raised in the above findings. It is the further purpose of these controls to recognize that the relationships among these buildings are as important as the individual buildings themselves.

### Applicability

(Board of Supervisors ordinance). The standard prescribed below shall apply to the C-3-O, -R, -S, and -G districts.

(Planning Commission resolution). The standards prescribed below shall apply to the area designated on the Interim Controls Map as the "Architectural and Historical Building Study District".

### Procedure

(Planning Commission resolution). The City Planning Commission shall be responsible for administering the standards described below.





## Standards

(Board of Supervisors ordinance). No building or structure located in the four C-3 Downtown Commercial Districts which is either designated as a type A or B building in Splendid Survivors or received a rating of 3, 4, or 5 in the 1976 Architectural Inventory of the Department of City Planning shall be demolished or altered in any way that degrades or diminishes its architectural or historic value. This prohibition shall remain in effect until such time as the City Planning Commission adopts a Structures of Merit list at which time said prohibition shall apply to all buildings and structures contained in this list.

(Planning Commission resolution). No type C building shall be demolished or altered in any way which degrades or alters its architectural or historic value if one or more of the following conditions exist:

- o The type C building is contiguous with or adjacent to a type A or B building.
- o The type C building is one of a group of three or more contiguous or adjacent type A, B, or C buildings.
- o The lineal street frontage of the type C building, when added to the lineal street frontage of all type A, B, or C buildings located within the same assessor's block face in which the subject type C building is located, exceeds 50 percent of the lineal street frontage of the assessor's block face.

A type C building which is not subject to the standard set forth above may be required to retain its building facade as a condition for approval of any required permit, license, or other land use entitlement.

No development shall have a building height at the street line which exceeds the lowest height of any type A, B, or C building located either along the same assessor's block frontage as the development or along the assessor's block frontage opposite the development; unless a finding is made that a height which exceeds this standard is compatible with the scale and design of other type A, B, or C buildings located along these two assessor's block frontages.

A building height which exceeds that permitted in the above section may be permitted for portions of the development set back 25 feet or more from the street line; provided that in no case may the building height exceed the mean height at the street line of all type A, B, and C buildings located along the same assessor's block frontage as the development, along the assessor's block frontage opposite the development, or along any adjacent assessor's block frontage. For the purposes of this provision, adjacent assessor's block frontage shall be defined as any assessor's



block frontage or portion thereof within a 500-foot radius from the geometric center of the development.

All development shall be built to the street property line in order to prevent the loss of building facade continuity along streets, parks, plazas, and open spaces; provided that building setbacks may be required in some cases to establish a more compatible relationship with surrounding type A, B, and C buildings.

All development shall maintain a compatible relationship with surrounding type A, B and C buildings and the prevailing character of the street on which the development is located. These elements, however, shall be used in a contemporary manner and shall not attempt to replicate the style of surrounding type A, B, and C buildings. A compatible relationship with respect to buildings shall mean either a similarity in materials, colors, fenestration, building form, and details; or, in exceptional cases, a major departure from the prevailing materials, colors, fenestration, form, and details in order to draw attention to the type A, B, or C building and emphasize its architectural style and value.

### ISSUE 3: PRESERVATION OF RENTAL HOUSING, APARTMENT UNITS, AND RESIDENTIAL HOTELS IN THE C-3 DISTRICTS

The interim controls for this issue are intended to be enacted by the Board of Supervisors.

#### Findings

Housing opportunities for San Franciscans of all income groups are diminishing and this phenomenon has had an especially severe and adverse impact on persons who are required by their economic circumstances to rent housing.

Significant numbers of low- to moderate-income rental housing units, either in apartment buildings or residential hotels, are found within the C-3 districts. The continued existence of these units is threatened by two factors--demolition of these structures to provide space for nonresidential new construction and conversion of residential hotels to tourist hotels.

Tentative findings of the San Francisco Downtown Conservation and Development Study estimate that 270 apartments and 2429 residential hotel units may be eliminated from housing stock in the C-3 districts during the next 20 years.





Smaller hotels in the C-3 districts that previously maintained a summer-tourist/winter-resident rental policy are now being converted to year-round exclusively tourist housing. The reasons for this recent trend are neither well documented nor well understood, and it is difficult to obtain data on its extent. It is estimated by the Central City Hospitality House that 995 residential hotel units have recently been or soon will be permanently converted to tourist housing.

#### Purpose

The purpose of these controls is to preserve existing rental housing units in the four C-3 districts, thus permitting the Downtown Conservation and Development Plan to explore and resolve issues raised in the above findings.

#### Applicability

The standards established below shall apply to any development or demolition or change in use or occupancy proposed for the C-3-O, -R, -S, and -G Downtown Commercial Districts.

#### Standards

No permit, license, or other land use permit shall be granted for any development, demolition, or change in use or occupancy that removes any apartment unit or rooming unit from the supply of rental housing. The conversion of any residential hotel unit to a unit intended for the primary use of tourists during any period of time in excess of two months in any year shall be prohibited.

#### ISSUE 4: PRESERVATION OF "BLUE-COLLAR" EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE C-3-S DISTRICT

The interim controls for this issue are intended to be enacted by the Board of Supervisors.

#### Findings

Business service and light industrial employment opportunities currently available in the C-3-S district are being displaced from this district by office, commercial, and retail uses and the parking facilities necessary to support these uses.



The functional role played by the C-3-S district in relation to the other three C-3 districts is not well understood, and there are conflicting views concerning what role this district should play.

#### Purpose

The purpose of these controls is to maintain existing conditions in that portion of the C-3-S district to the west of Yerba Buena Center so that the Downtown Conservation and Development Plan is able to explore the issues raised in the above findings and to develop appropriate land use policies for resolving them.

#### Applicability

The standards described below shall apply to any development, demolition, or change in use or occupancy proposed for the area designated on the Interim Controls Map as the "Industrial and Commercial Services Study District."

#### Standards

No permit, license, or other land use entitlement shall be granted for any development, demolition, or change in use or occupancy subject to these controls which would displace any structure, facility, building, or site occupied by a business enterprise or operation providing employment for four or more persons who are compensated on an hourly basis. There shall be a rebuttable presumption that displacement has occurred whenever any business, enterprise, or operation described above is or will be terminated subsequent to the effective date of these controls, and the structure, facility, building, or site formerly occupied by said business, enterprise, or operation is proposed for ultimate use or reuse by a business, enterprise, or operation that does not employ persons who are compensated on an hourly basis.

No permit, license, or other land use entitlement shall be granted for any development, demolition, or change in use or occupancy subject to these controls which irrevocably commits all or part of the C-3-S Special Study District to a particular land use or functional relationship to the Downtown, if such commitment would compromise the ability of the Downtown Conservation and Development Plan to fully and adequately address and resolve issues raised in the findings.





## ISSUE 5: PRESERVATION OF PARKING OPTIONS IN THE DOWNTOWN

The interim controls for this issue are intended to be enacted by the Board of Supervisors.

### Findings

Since the adoption of the 1968 revisions of the City Planning Code, which contained criteria for the review of major parking garages proposed for the C-3 Downtown Commercial Districts, and the adoption of the plan for transportation in 1972, there has been a tremendous increase in office, commercial, and retail growth in the Downtown and an accompanying increase in the demand for off-street parking. This increase in parking demand was not anticipated either by the code revisions or the transportation plan. The additional growth in the San Francisco Downtown projected for the next 20 years will further increase the demand for Downtown parking.

Increasing the supply of parking to meet demand will encourage additional automobile travel to and within the Downtown, therefore causing severe, adverse impacts on the environmental quality of the Downtown with respect to noise, air quality, pedestrian safety, and the ability of the transit system to provide efficient service.

The Transportation Element of the Master Plan was revised in 1977 with respect to parking. The objectives and policies of this revision relevant to the Downtown need to be integrated with the other elements of the Downtown Conservation and Development Plan.

### Purpose

The purpose of these controls is to regulate parking facilities and structures and automobile-oriented land uses in the C-3 Downtown Commercial Districts so that the Downtown Conservation and Development Plan has the opportunity to fully explore issues raised in the above findings and the alternatives for resolving them.

### Applicability

The standards described below shall apply to the areas designated on the Interim Controls Map as the "Downtown Core Automobile Control Area," the "Downtown Core Short-term Parking Area," and the "Downtown Long-Term Parking Area."



## Standards for Downtown Core Automobile Control Area

No development shall include the following:

- o parking buildings or structures, including automobile storage garages, either public or private, or major (nonaccessory) automobile parking garages
- o parking lots, whether temporary or permanent
- o automobile service stations or automobile washing facilities, as described in Section 223 of the City Planning Code
- o fleet or pool facilities for 10 or more vehicles, or storage garage or yard for commercial vehicles or trucks
- o "drive-in" use serving customers waiting in parked motor vehicles.

No existing use shall be permitted to expand in any manner which would increase the intensity or volume of activity of said use.

Accessory parking, as described in Section 204.5 of the City Planning Code, that provides 10 or more parking spaces shall be permitted in a development only upon approval by the Planning Commission as a conditional use under Section 303 of the code.

Any existing parking lot that does not involve a building or structure, except where such building or structure is used for a service or activity incidental to the operation of said lot, shall be subject to the provisions of Section 153 of the City Planning Code regarding limited continuance of certain nonconforming uses.

## Standards for Downtown Core Short-Term Parking Areas

A short-term parking facility, as used in this standard, shall mean a facility, whether a lot, structure, or building, that provides shopping and business parking for a period not to exceed an average of four hours for each vehicle stored during week day hours of operation of said parking facility.

Any development which provides a temporary or permanent parking lot or a public or private parking garage shall be permitted only upon approval by the Planning





Commission as a conditional use under Section 303 of the City Planning Code. Said lot or garage shall be for short-term parking only, except as long-term parking may be permitted (see below).

Accessory parking, as described in Section 204.5 of this code, that provides 10 or more spaces shall be permitted in a development only upon approval by the Planning Commission as a conditional use under Section 303 of this code.

Upon approval by the Planning Commission, under conditional use procedures, long-term parking, as defined below, may be permitted for any parking lot, storage garage or major (nonaccessory) automobile parking garage in a development, providing that such parking is located for the exclusive use of car or van pool vehicles. Such parking, when provided, shall not exceed 25 percent of the total available spaces in any parking facility.

No proposed development shall include a "drive-in" service for customers waiting in parked motor vehicles.

No development shall provide fleet or pool facilities for 10 or more vehicles, and storage garage or yard for commercial vehicles or trucks shall be permitted.

#### Standards for the Downtown Long-Term Parking Area

A long-term parking facility, as used in the standard, shall mean a facility, whether a lot, structure or building, that provides automobile parking for longer than an average of four hours for each vehicle stored.

Any principal or conditional use permitted in the M-1, M-2 or -P districts, except automobile storage garage, either public or private, or major (nonaccessory) automobile parking group, shall be permitted.

Any proposed automobile storage garage, either public or private, or major (nonaccessory) automobile parking garage shall be permitted by the Planning Commission as a conditional use under Section 303 of this code.

#### ISSUE 6: CITY-WIDE IMPACTS OF EXISTING BASIC FAR, HEIGHT, AND BULK LIMITS

The interim controls for this issue are intended to be enacted by the Board of Supervisors.



## Findings

Before the basic FARs and height limits permitted in the C-3 Downtown Commercial Districts are modified, their city-wide impacts with respect to the availability and cost of public services, housing opportunities, and general liveability should be analyzed and major policy decisions to mitigate these impacts must be made. This analysis and policy making is most appropriately undertaken in the context of the Downtown Conservation and Development Plan.

Until this plan is completed and until the impacts are analyzed and policy decisions made, it will be necessary to effect some lowering of the existing permitted basic FARs and maximum height limits.

The basic FAR and height limits prescribed in Proposition O, when combined with all other elements of the interim controls, would allow the objectives described above to be achieved.

The bulk limits applicable in the C-3 Downtown Commercial Districts establish maximum plan dimensions that apply uniformly to all floors of the given building above a specified height. Development pressures to realize the maximum floor area within this permitted uniform building envelope have in turn resulted in the construction of buildings that closely resemble each other in form. Provisions of the bulk limits permitting heights of up to 150 feet along street frontages have also led to a loss of human scale at the pedestrian level and incompatible visual relationships to existing streetscapes. These unintended consequences of the bulk limit are degrading the visual quality of the Downtown and its pedestrian environment. Interim modification of this limit is required until it can be examined by the Downtown Conservation and Development Plan.

## Purpose

The purpose of these controls is to provide modifications of the basic FAR, height, and bulk limits that apply in the C-3 Downtown Commercial Districts in order to provide some immediate mitigation of their adverse impacts on the Downtown and on the city while the Conservation and Development Plan is being prepared.

## Standards

Floor Area Ratio Limits. Table I of Section 124 of the City Planning Code is hereby amended to establish new basic floor area ratio limits in the C-3 district as follows:





District	Basic Floor Area Ratio Limit
C-3-O	8 to 1
C-3-R	7 to 1
C-3-G	5 to 1
C-3-S	5 to 1

Regardless of any established or future bonus provisions, no building or development in any C-3 district shall exceed the following maximum floor area ratios hereby established:

District	Basic Floor Area Ratio Limit
C-3-O	14 to 1
C-3-R	10 to 1
C-3-G	8 to 1
C-3-S	8 to 1

Height Limits. The Zoning Map of the City and County of San Francisco, as described in Sections 105 and 106 of the City Planning Code is hereby amended to establish new maximum building height limits in the C-3 districts as follows:

C-3-O (Downtown Office District)	260 feet
C-3-R (Downtown Retail District)	150 feet
C-3-G (Downtown General Commercial District)	130 feet
C-3-S (Downtown Support District)	130 feet

Section 261, subsection (b), of the City Planning Code is hereby amended by adding the following:

3. No portion of a structure in any C-3-O, C-3-R, C-3-G, or C-3-S district shall exceed the heights specified below, except as provided in Section 260, subsection (b):

District	Height Limit
C-3-O	260 feet
C-3-R	150 feet
C-3-G	130 feet
C-3-S	130 feet



Modification of Bulk Limits. Table 7 of Section 270 of the City Planning Code is amended to establish a new height for the I district above which maximum dimensions apply. The new height is 100 feet.

Section 271 of the City Planning Code is amended to add subsection (d) -"Average Floor Area rule for G, H, and I Districts." Under this new subsection the maximum diagonal plan dimension may be exceeded provided that the following conditions are satisfied:

- o The average of the floor areas of all floors subject to this dimension shall not exceed 20,000 square feet.
- o The maximum diagonal dimension shall not be exceeded in the upper 1/3 of all the floors subject to this dimension.
- o The maximum diagonal dimension shall be exceeded in the lower 2/3 of all the floors subject to this dimension only if the resulting building form meets the design objectives and guidelines established for the application of the average floor area rule by the Department of City Planning.

#### ISSUE 7: MODIFICATION OF THE TEN FAR DEVELOPMENT BONUSES, THE CORNER LOT PREMIUM, AND THE FAR TRANSFER PROVISION

The interim controls for this issue are intended for enactment by the Board of Supervisors. If Proposition O, which abolishes the ten development bonuses, is approved by the voters, elements of the following controls that do not provide bonuses as permitted by Proposition O would be rendered null and void. Bonuses provided below that would be permitted by Proposition O are so noted.

#### Findings

The provisions of the City Planning Code offering FAR bonuses in exchange for incorporating certain features into the design of buildings tend to reward developers for providing design features they would otherwise furnish for economic reasons or in order for the building to function correctly.

The bonus provisions fail to specify adequate design standards governing the features for which FAR bonuses are offered.

The bonus provisions incorrectly assume that only projects utilizing the last, highest increment of development density possible under the bonus system will have adverse impacts requiring mitigation through the bonus features.





The bonus provisions are not founded in a comprehensive plan for the Downtown, but instead are based only on a generalized desire to produce public benefits. They are therefore an inappropriate tool for achieving their stated purpose of promoting the efficient location and arrangement of Downtown development.

The bonus provisions provide a bonus for one feature, parking access, which now contravenes public policy.

The corner lot floor area premium, which was originally conceived for use only in residential districts, gives favorable treatment to certain building sites solely by the accident of geography and it lacks any planning basis.

Although the floor area transfer provision appears to address the issue of architectural and historical landmark preservation, it has never been used for this or any other purpose.

#### Purpose

The purpose of these controls is to suspend the operation of the FAR bonus system, the corner lot premium, and the floor area transfer provision until they have been reassessed by the Downtown Conservation and Development Plan.

#### Applicability

The standards established below shall apply to all development in the C-3-O, -R, -G, and -S Downtown Commercial Districts.

#### Standards

No proponent of development subject to these controls shall be permitted to provide any or all of the ten building features listed in Section 126 of the City Planning Code in exchange for an FAR bonus.

The Planning Commission is authorized to require a proponent of development subject to these regulations to provide any or all of the building features listed in Section 126 of the City Planning Code in exchange for an FAR bonus.

The Planning Commission is authorized to require a proponent of development subject to these regulations to provide any or all of the building features listed in Section 126 of the Planning Code, except the rapid transit proximity, parking



access, and multiple building entrances features, when the commission determines that such features are required for a development to function correctly and to relate effectively to its surroundings. Building features required by the commission shall be awarded the FAR bonus provided in Section 126 of the code, provided that the feature satisfies all pertinent criteria prescribed in Section 126 and all pertinent criteria established as follows:

- o Rapid transit access: A FAR bonus for this feature shall be granted only in conjunction with the establishment of a transit management program approved by the Planning Commission and incorporating at least the following elements: flexible employee working hours for transit users designed to spread out peak period transit loads; on-going in-house publicity regarding the availability of transit; and direct and indirect financial incentives to encourage transit use. (Note: This bonus is authorized by Proposition O under encouragement of public transit usage.)
- o Plazas: An FAR bonus shall be granted for this feature only if it meets the following design criteria:
  - Plazas shall be located where pedestrian-oriented open space is desirable, where they would not conflict with or weaken existing plazas or open spaces, and where they would not interrupt the continuity of any pedestrian-oriented uses along the street facade.
  - Plazas shall be clearly identified through signing to encourage public access and use.
  - Plazas shall receive sunlight from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. (local time) from April 1 through October 30.
  - Plazas shall be free from winds that exceed 20 mph more than 5 percent of the period 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. (local time) from April 1 through October 30. Wind is defined here to mean wind five feet above the pedestrian surface of the plaza and at all points in the plaza accessible to pedestrians.
  - Plazas shall be accessible to disabled and handicapped persons.(Note: This bonus is authorized by Proposition O under improvement of pedestrian environment.)
- o Multiple building entrances (No bonus authorized)





- o Sidewalk widening and shortening walking distances:
  - these features shall not weaken the continuity and enclosure of streets, plazas, or other public outdoor spaces
  - these improvements shall be open to and designed to encourage use by the general public
  - these features shall be a logical extension or complement to larger pedestrian network
  - the land uses and facilities adjoining these features shall be pedestrian oriented, such as retail shops, restaurants, galleries, and directly accessible to these facilities
  - the buildings or portions thereof located along these features are designed to maintain a scale that is compatible with and supportive of pedestrian use
- o Side setback (No bonus authorized)
- o Low coverage at upper floors (No bonus authorized)
- o Observation deck (No bonus authorized)
- o Supplemental criteria: In addition to the criteria listed above, the Planning Commission may adopt supplemental criteria for the design of these building features.
- o The Planning Commission is authorized to require a proponent of development subject to these regulations to provide building features other than those listed above which the commission determines provide a significant public benefit. The commission shall establish an FAR bonus for each of these features, which shall at least address the following categories:
  - encouragement of public transit usage
  - energy conservation beyond that mandated by law
  - improvement of the pedestrian environment
  - development of new housing in San Francisco.



- o Sections 126(d) and 127 of the City Planning Code are hereby repealed.

#### ISSUE 8: PROTECTION OF VIEW TO AND FROM NOB HILL; RELATIONSHIP OF PORTSMOUTH CORRIDOR AND VICINITY TO JACKSON SQUARE AND CHINATOWN

The interim controls for the northwest corner of the C-3-O district are intended to be effected by a height limit enacted by the Board of Supervisors and by the exercise of discretionary review over new development by the Planning Commission. The findings, purpose, and applicability provisions listed below may be used in both the board's ordinance and the commission's resolution.

##### Findings

The height and bulk limitations prevailing in the northwest corner of the C-3-O district in the vicinity of the Portsmouth corridor do not now adequately protect views from this district to Nob Hill and from Nob Hill to the San Francisco Bay. These height and bulk limitations are not sensitive to the relationship between the C-3-O district and the adjacent Jackson Square Historic District and the Chinatown area.

These height and bulk limitations allow the construction of buildings that impinge upon and diminish the historic and architectural values of individual buildings and groups of buildings in the C-3-O district.

##### Purpose

The purpose of these controls is to establish standards for the height and bulk of buildings proposed for construction in the northwest corner of the C-3-O district in order to allow the Downtown Conservation and Development Plan the full opportunity to resolve the issues raised in the above findings.

##### Applicability

The standards prescribed below shall apply to new development proposed for the area designated on the Interim Controls Map as the "Portsmouth Corridor Height and Bulk Control District."





## Procedures

(Planning Commission resolution). Any new development to which these controls apply shall be subjected to a visual analysis performed by its proponent demonstrating its impact on views from the C-3-O district to Nob Hill and from Nob Hill to the San Francisco Bay, and its impact on the Jackson Square Special Historic District and the Chinatown area. This analysis shall include explicit consideration of building height and form alternatives designed to mitigate any adverse impacts.

Prior to performing the visual analysis, the proponent shall consult with staff of the Department of City Planning to determine the appropriate number and location of vantage points.

The visual analysis shall be submitted to the Planning Commission concurrent with application for any permit required by the City of San Francisco. The commission shall determine whether the proposed development conforms to the standards set forth below.

## Standards

(Board of Supervisors ordinance). No development subject to these controls shall exceed a height of 100 feet.

(Planning Commission resolution). No development shall obscure or eliminate views that establish significant relationships among the C-3-O district, Nob Hill, and the San Francisco Bay, and development shall attempt to strengthen these relationships. For the purpose of this standard, significant relationships shall mean relationships between natural and man-built features that have a strong sense of identity and that give character and definition both to the areas in which they are located and to the City of San Francisco.

Development shall achieve a compatible relationship with the Jackson Square Historic District, the Chinatown area, and historic and architecturally significant buildings in the C-3-O district with respect to building height and form and shall attempt to enhance the special character of these districts, areas, and buildings.

Development shall maintain the visual distinction between Nob Hill and the Downtown.



## ISSUE 9: ENERGY CONSERVATION AND DOWNTOWN GROWTH

The interim controls for this issue are intended for adoption by resolution of the Planning Commission.

### Findings

The designs of Downtown buildings constructed during the past decades of relative energy abundance have not responded well to the climate. Instead they have relied primarily on energy-intensive mechanical systems to maintain comfortable interior environments. Title 24 of the California Administrative Code ensures a certain level of improved energy efficiency, but there remain significant opportunities for new development Downtown to go beyond the standards required by law.

The need for energy conservation in the Downtown to go beyond what is required by law becomes overwhelmingly apparent when energy consumption is placed within the context of the city's annual energy budget. As the highest consumer of energy per square foot of developed land, the Downtown represents a significant fraction of this budget, and the magnitude of impact from instituting conservation measures is correspondingly great.

### Purpose

The purpose of these controls is to prescribe standards for increasing the responsiveness of new development to energy conservation opportunities beyond those required by law. It is the further purpose of these controls that experience gained in their application be the basis of energy issue analysis and policy development for the Downtown Conservation and Development Plan.

### Applicability

The standards prescribed below shall apply to all development in the C-3-O, -R, -S, and -G Downtown Commercial Districts.

### Procedure

The standards prescribed below are in the form of energy conservation measures. The project team for a development shall submit such information and evidence as may be required by the Planning Commission demonstrating that it has seriously





considered the application of these measures to the project design in a good faith effort to exceed the energy conservation standards required by state law.

## Standards

The following energy conservation measures are grouped in the order of priority in which they should be considered by the project team.

### Building Siting Measures

- o Determine optimum surface-to-volume ratio for: daylight integration, heat loss reduction, and solar impact minimization.
- o Analyze building profile impact on solar access potential for neighboring properties.
- o Study configurations which maximize potential for the use of solar collector systems.
- o Compare alternative development strategies which use low- or mid-rise development on another larger property or set of properties.
- o Maximize south and north facades; minimize high heat gain east and west facades.
- o Minimize infiltration areas facing prevailing winds.
- o Utilize landscaping at ground level for seasonal sunshading and/or windbreak-ing.
- o Examine effect of building footprint on mass transit connections to the site.

### Building Lighting System Measures

- o Design artificial lighting systems to respond to daylight integration.
- o Control glare and solar heat gain in daylight integration strategy.
- o Zone artificial lighting systems into perimeter and interior zones with separate circuits.



- o Maximize localized control of lighting system (ideally fixture by fixture with central override).
- o Equip fixtures with photocell dimming systems to accurately respond to daylight integration.
- o Program floor by floor lighting system shutoff at end of day (with local override).
- o Minimize watts/s. f. for lighting system by using the most efficient bulk and fixture assemblies.
- o Investigate the use of heat-of-light air return fixtures.
- o Investigate solid state ballast systems.
- o Zone lighting system to respond to function of each space in terms of minimum required footcandle requirements.
- o Examine low-level ambient light used with task lighting.

#### Building Cooling System Measures

- o Use building mass as a heat sink to absorb interior heat built up during day.
- o Exhaust stored heat with night ventilation taking advantage of diurnal temperature swing.
- o Use economizer cycle whenever possible.
- o Investigate the use of alternative heat storage media (water tanks, rockbeds, phase-change chemical rods) as passive heat sinks.
- o Use cooling design criteria of 78°F DB and 55 percent RH.
- o Design systems to meet 95 percent of weather conditions.
- o Do not mechanically cool corridors or low-use areas.
- o Shut off air-conditioning service to areas when they are unoccupied.
- o Plan for synchronization of natural cooling and mechanical cooling modes.





- o Use microcomputer control systems to optimize operational efficiency.
- o Develop an energy management program for the building user so that occupants can participate in conservation measures.
- o Develop an energy management program for building operation by building engineer.
- o Reduce ventilation during air-conditioning mode.
- o Reduce infiltration.
- o Reduce cooling loads through effective sunshading.
- o Reduce heat gain through walls, roofs and floors.
- o Reduce internal heat gains due to equipment.
- o Use evaporative cooling.

#### Building Equipment System Measures

- o Reduce elevator energy requirements.
- o Encourage use of stairs whenever possible.
- o Reduce escalator energy requirements.
- o Equip all electrically driven machines with timer switch devices.
- o Reduce peak loads.
- o Reduce transformer losses.
- o Improve efficiency of motors.
- o Correct power factor.
- o Reduce volume of flow in air distribution systems.

#### Building Heating System Measures

- o Set back indoor temperatures in heating season during unoccupied hours.



- o Reduce indoor temperatures during occupied hours (68°F DB and 30 percent RH).
- o Heat only according to need. Do not heat infrequently used areas (e.g., storage areas).
- o Do not heat corridors.
- o Use passive solar heat gain to condition corridors and stairwells.
- o Use structural mass as heat storage and radiator for recycling of interior heat gain.
- o Use rockbed heat storage systems.
- o Reduce levels of relative humidity.
- o Shut down ventilation system during unoccupied hours.
- o Reduce ventilation rates during occupied periods.
- o Reduce infiltration rates.
- o Increase direct solar heat gain to occupied spaces.
- o Examine the use of Trombe walls and solar plenums.
- o Study the use of retractable insulation shutters, shades, bend walls, or drapes.
- o Install microcomputer system control for heating mode.
- o Control building ventilation.
- o Use separate makeup in supply for exhaust hoods to reduce outdoor air ventilation.
- o Reduce glazing area.
- o Use rockbeds for thermal storage.
- o Examine use of solar hot water collector systems for space and water heating.
- o Examine use of heat pumps and heat wheels for waste heat recycling.



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